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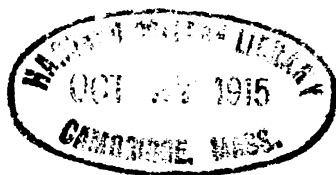
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ROBERT GREENE

BY
JOHN CLARK JORDAN

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY, IN THE
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**TO
MY GRANDFATHER
JOHN DOWNEY**

This Monograph has been approved by the Department of English and Comparative Literature in Columbia University as a contribution to knowledge worthy of publication.

A. H. THORNDIKE,
Executive Officer.

PREFACE

ROBERT GREENE has been written about profusely. "More time and trouble have been bestowed than one cares to remember," complained the late Mr. Collins as he laid down his editor's pen. So much, indeed, has been done, so various have been the researches as to Greene's sources, his literary relationships, his friendships and his quarrels, his sinning and repenting, that one who desires to study him must go over a vast amount of material. There is the further difficulty that a few sensational remarks in Greene's writings have been given such emphasis as to withdraw attention from certain other aspects of his works and to obscure what is of more importance. I have tried to present a comprehensive treatment, based upon the investigations of previous writers and developed by what I have been able to add of my own.

In the personality of Greene, and in the nature of his activity, there is considerable to stir the imagination, and to invite criticism and evaluation. These two elements, the human and the literary significance of Greene's work, I have, therefore, sought to bear in mind. Thus submitting Greene to analysis, I have found the outlines of his character as a man of letters to be rather sharply drawn. Sharply enough, I think, to be permanent. New facts will be added, new sources discovered. But these will only help to make the portrait a little more distinct. They will not, I believe, change our fundamental idea of the man or of his attitude toward literature.

To those scholars who have made my work possible I acknowledge my indebtedness. Especially have I benefited

from the labors of Dr. Samuel Lee Wolff, whose contributions to the knowledge and understanding of Greene have been of great value. To the librarians of Columbia University, and to Miss Jennie Craig and her assistant, Miss Olive Paine, of the English Seminar Library of the University of Illinois, I give my thanks for generous help. To my wife I owe much for criticism and for preparation of the manuscript for the press.

It is a pleasure to express my appreciation for the obligations I am under to the Department of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University: to Professor G. P. Krapp; to Professor J. B. Fletcher, who has offered many valuable suggestions. To Professor A. H. Thorndike, in whose mind my work had its inception, and whose counsel and letters have aided me greatly, I feel sincere gratitude.

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ROBERT GREENE: A STUDY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

ROBERT GREENE was baptized in Norwich¹ on July 11, 1558.² He died in London, September 3, 1592. Of the life that extended between these dates there is little of actual record. On November 26, 1575, Greene was matriculated as a sizar at St. John's Cambridge. From that college he received his primary degree in 1578.³ In 1583, July 7, he was at Clare Hall,⁴ where he was granted the degree of Master of Arts. Sometime in 1585 or '86 he was married. Oxford conferred a degree in July, 1588; so that he was henceforth the *Academiae Utriusque Magister in Artibus* of which he was so vain. The facts which I have enumerated,

NOTE — All references unless otherwise stated are to Grosart's edition to the *Complete Works of Robert Greene*, 15 vols. 8vo. 1881-3. Huth Library Series.

¹ Greene himself speaks of the "Cittie of Norwitch, where I was bred and borne," (*Repentance*, Vol. XII., p. 171) and he sometimes added *Norfolciensis* to his name. See Epistle Dedicatory to Lodge's *Euphues, his Shadowe*, signed "Rob. Greene Norfolciensis." (Lodge's *Complete Works*, Vol. II. Printed for Hunterian Club, 1883); also Epistle Dedicatory to *A Maiden's Dreame*, signed "R. Greene, Nordovicensis." Vol. XIV., p. 300.

² Register of St. George, Tombland. See J. C. Collins' edition of Greene's *Plays and Poems*, 1905, Vol. I., p. 12.

³ University Register.

⁴ "From my Studie in Clarehall the vij of Julie." The Epistle to the second part of *Mamillia*. Vol. II., p. 143.

together with the records on the Stationers' Register and the title-pages of his works, are all that we have that can be dated.

Greene talked about himself; others talked about him. And so, while his life can never be known exactly or in detail, his comings and goings, the events of his existence in the capital, the man that he was can be perceived with more vividness than can most of his fellows. From his own works,⁵ and from the bitter controversy which arose after his death, with the harsh words that passed back and forth between Harvey and Nashe,⁶ we can learn much of how Greene looked and acted.

"A jolly long red peake, like the spire of a steeple," says Nashe,⁷ "hee cherisht continually without cutting, whereat a man might hang a Jewell, it was so sharp and pendant." . . . "A very faire Cloake," he had, "with sleeves, of . . . greene; it would serve you as fine as may bee" — this to Gabriel Harvey, the ropemaker's son — "if you bee wise, play the good husband and listen after it, you may buy it ten shillings better cheape than it cost him. By S. Silver, . . . theres a great many ropes go to ten shillings. If you want a greasy pair of silk stockings also, to show your selfe at the Court, they are there to be had too amongst his moveables."

"Hee inherited more vertues than vices," says Nashe again. "Debt and deadly sinne, who is not subject to? with any notorious crime I never knew him tainted." . . . "A good fellowe he was;" considerable of a drinker. "Hee made no account of winning credite by his workes, . . . his

⁵ The *Repentance* and various of the Prefaces.

⁶ In his Introduction to the *Works of Thomas Nashe*, Vol. V., Mr. Ronald B. McKerrow has a most excellent account of this quarrel. The subject is there treated exhaustively and finally.

⁷ *Four Letters Confuted*. Ed. McKerrow, Vol. I., p. 287.

only care was to have a spel in his purse to conjure up a good cuppe of wine with at all times." . . . "Why should art answer for the infirmities of maners? Hee had his faultes, and thou thy follyes."

The young Bohemians lived hard in those days. And they died hard. Greene was only thirty-four when he went to that "fatall banquet of Rhenish wine and pickled hearing (if thou wilt needs have it so)."⁸ All through the month of August Greene was ill, at first taking no alarm. He got his *Blacke Bookes Messenger* ready for the press, and told his plans for the *Blacke Booke* itself.⁹ Then gradually, as the days wore on, he came to realize that he could never be well. He was greatly troubled in his mind. If he could only pray, he would be happy. But there was a voice ringing in his ears, "Robin Greene, thou art damned." He tried to find comfort in the hope of God's mercy, and be pacified. But the battle went on. Sometimes he hoped, sometimes he feared. "There was one thief saved and no more, therefore presume not; and there was one saved, and therefore despair not."

The last night came. "He walked to his chaire and back againe the night before he departed," writes the printer of the *Repentance*,¹⁰ "and then (being feeble) laying him downe on his bed, about nine of the clocke at night, a friende of his tolde him, that his Wife had sent him commendations, and that shee was in good health: whereat hee greatly rejoiced, confessed that he had mightily wronged her, and wished that hee might see her before he departed. Whereupon (feeling his time was but short) hee tooke pen and inke, & wrote her a Letter to this effect.

"Sweet Wife, as ever there was any good will or friendship betweene thee and mee see this bearer (my Host) satisfied of

⁸ Gabriel *would* have it so, and the banquet is immortal.

⁹ Vol. XI., p. 5.

¹⁰ Vol. XII., p. 185.

his debt: I owe him tenne pound, and but for him I had perished in the streetes. Forget and forgive my wronges done unto thee, and Almighty God have mercie on my soule. Farewell till we meet in heaven, for on earth thou shalt never see me more.

This 2 of September.

1592

Written by thy dying Husband.

ROBERT GREENE."¹¹

Greene ended his days in poverty.¹² His friends deserted him, and he was left alone. He would indeed have died in the streets had not the shoemaker of Dowgate and his wife taken care of him, — a task in which they were assisted by the mother of Greene's illegitimate son.

Such was the manner of his death on the third of September. Mrs. Isam crowned him with a garland of bay leaves, and on the following day they buried him.¹³

"Oh Robin Greene, and unfortunate because thou art Robin!" Greene would have said of one of the unhappy creatures of his imagination. Let us say it of him; there is none it fits better.

With all its sadness — with all its morbidness and sentimentalism, some would say — Greene's death was not a tragedy. It does not arouse profound emotion. No manner of death could do that for him. His life had not been big

¹¹ This letter is given by Harvey in practically the same form in his *Four Letters, and certaine Sonnets: Especially touching Robert Greene, and other parties, by him abused*. Harvey's Works. Ed. Grosart. Vol. I., p. 171.

¹² Nashe denies this: "For the lowsie circumstance of his poverty before his death, and sending that miserable writte to his wife, it cannot be but thou lyst, learned Gabriell." Ed. McKerrow. Vol. I., p. 287.

¹³ Greene was buried in the New Churchyard, near Bedlam.

enough. His character had been too much of the surface, rather than of the depth. He had lived for the day that was passing, nor heeded that eternity would come. We need not revile him as base, believing the words that he uttered in his despair or remembering only his ill-starred antagonism to a greater, but a fellow, dramatist; we need not apologize for his shortcomings, in order to say that Greene was not of the strong. He was weak; he was superficial. But we can feel a genuine sympathy for him, and a regret that his life should have ended so miserably.

There is a statement of his, made on his deathbed, which represents pretty well the life of the man in its activities and its remorse. It shall serve us here to introduce the purpose of this volume. "*Many things I have wrote to get money.*"¹⁴ Greene was a man of letters, and as such I shall try to present him. Whatever literary form he took up, it was for exploitation; whatever he dropped, it was because the material or the demand was exhausted. He did what no man before him in England had done so extensively: he wrote to sell.

"Povertie is the father of innumerable infirmities." That was Greene's view of the task. We of today can scarcely appreciate the difficulty. Literature is inseparably linked with the material conditions which make it possible. In the success of our modern professional writers, we forget that this relation has always existed, that it was a new thing in the reign of Elizabeth for a man to place his "chiefest stay of living" in an inkhorn and a pen. Greene, however, did so for several years. We have thirteen volumes of his work as the product of his industry. What shall we say of them and of him?

In 1599 one Fastidious Brisk, coxcomb and gallant, was boasting of the elegance of his mistress' language,

¹⁴ *Greenes Vision*. Vol. XII., p. 195.

"Oh, it flows from her like nectar, . . . she does observe as pure a phrase, and use as choice figures in her ordinary conferences, as any be in the *Arcadia*."

From Carlo, the jester, Fastidious got this rebuff,

"Or rather from Greene's works, whence she may steal with more security."¹⁵

Whether or not Carlo's sly reflection upon the culture of Fastidious' lady was meant as a disparagement upon the works of Greene, it does suggest that characteristic which impresses most of Greene's readers, namely, his productivity as compared with his contemporaries. For Greene was the most prolific of all the Elizabethan writers.

He was the most versatile, too. No other man in the Elizabethan period attempted so many different kinds of work. Greene did all that the rest did, and more. Drama, poetry, framework tales, romances, social pamphlets, treatises, prodigal-son stories, repentances, — all these flowed from his pen with a rapidity that is amazing. "In a night & a day would he have yarkt up a pamphlet as well as in seaven yeare," his friend Nashe tells us, "and glad was that Printer that might bee so blest to paye him deare for the very dregs of his wit." Greene wrote only twelve years, and he had but come into his prime when he died. Yet the range of his activity was far greater than many another man attains to in a lifetime. I am not saying that, although Greene excelled his contemporaries in the matter of versatility, he at the same time excelled them individually in any one type of work. He wrote no romance worthy to rank with the *Arcadia*; he composed nothing which in charm of style is to be compared with Lodge's *Rosalynde*. But it is not to be denied that Greene did have ease in writing, and

¹⁵ *Every Man Out of His Humour*. Act III. Sc. I.

that he turned his hand to various tasks with about the same degree of proficiency.

Fertility and versatility are Greene's most obvious distinctions. He manifests, along with these, a third. In spite of his artificiality of style, his shallowness of characterization, his inconsistencies of plot, his lack of seriousness, which are real defects, Greene exhibited a freedom of literary art; and although he never, even to the end of his career, ceased to shout morality from his title-pages, yet in practice he came to have an almost complete enfranchisement from the traditions of the earlier didactic writers. If I may be permitted to restate the idea, I mean that notwithstanding the conventions of Elizabethan literature in all its forms, which influenced no author more than him, Greene developed an understanding of the fact that art to be successful must not be wholly for man's sake; that it must be partly for art's sake as well.

Closely related to this achievement is growth toward consciousness of method. Greene's work is full of crudities, and some of it is not interesting. Emphasis is often misplaced, being upon speech rather than upon action. The first half of a novel is unduly elaborated at the expense of the latter, and episodes in the course of the main action are frequently too extended. But beneath the surface, the careful reader can perceive in Greene a definiteness of plan. Plot

The overemphasized story of Valericus' rejection of Castania¹⁶ may be used as an illustration. Though it exemplifies all the faults just enumerated, it was meant, — however incompetently done — to explain Valericus' later betrayal of Castania. A lady of high degree is in love with a stranger who has come to the court. For the progress of the story it is necessary that the duke, her father, hear of the love-affair. No friend will betray them; an enemy

¹⁶ *Carde of Fancie*, Vol. IV.

must do it. But Castania and Gwydonius are both in high esteem. A rejected lover is the only enemy possible. He must be provided early in the narrative, for he cannot be *deus ex machina*. That is Greene's plan. Valericus' suit is too long drawn out. He might have been transformed from a lover into an enemy with much more despatch. We do not care to listen to all his speeches or to read all his letters. The device is not well handled, looked at from our point of view. But that there is a device at all is reason for commendation.

It is out of the above four characteristics that our interest in Greene arises, and our problems too. His talent, revealing itself in these various ways, representing multiform activities in one body of work, and summing up and expressing the ideas and conventions of the age, gives him his place as a man of letters and entitles him to a consideration in any study of the literary activities of his time. Greene was not great,—but a man does not have to be great to be worthy of study.

To the student and critic, then, there comes the task of evaluating the product of Greene's talent. He must describe, explain, and judge the work which Greene has left; and he must show the influences which produced it, point out the significance to be attached to it, and portray so far as possible the personality back of it.

certain new materials, and that it accomplished certain results as to style and method. Both of these facts are, however, of importance in a consideration of the subsequent development of Elizabethan novels.

The introduction of new ideas manifested itself, in the first place, in the influence that arose from the translation of various continental works of which Guevara's *El Relox de Principes* (by Berners, 1534; and by North, 1557) and Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano* (by Thomas Hoby, 1561)² were the most significant. The result of such translations as these was the quickening of an already present, but older, interest in the kind of literature represented by Elyot's *Governor* (1531) and Ascham's *Schoolmaster* (published 1570), and numerous other treatises intended for instruction in letters and in forms of refinement, into a genuine and eager desire for the more cultivated manners and thoughts of social life. In the second place, along with the influence of these native and infused ideas represented by these moral treatises must be considered that which arose from the translations of novels. Although the collections of Painter, Fenton, Pettie, and the rest,³ may at first appear to be translations of continental stories, both Renaissance and classical, the fundamental purpose of them was not unlike that of the moral treatises themselves. For under the form of a story of love or fortune the translator proclaimed his moral purpose.⁴ It may be that

² The translation was frequently reprinted. There was also a Latin translation in 1571 by Bartholomew Clerke which was almost as popular as the English one.

³ Painter, 1566; Fenton, 1567; Fortesque, 1571; Pettie, 1576; Whetstone, 1576; Riche, 1581; etc.

⁴ Painter, for example, prefixed a long discourse, sometimes running to the length of a couple of dry, uninteresting pages, to each of the novels he translated. Those discourses were meant to be somewhat in the nature of an argument, but they were designed also to point out the exceedingly great value, and the moral, of the story about to be

these professions of a moral purpose are not to be taken too seriously.⁵ At the same time, it cannot be denied that such collections, of which the ostensible aim was edification, did, under the guise of the narrative form, do much to set forth new ideas on such subjects as love, friendship, and fortune; to enlarge the sphere of emotion; and to combine with the influence of the treatises to broaden the standard of culture in accordance with the ideals of the more advanced peoples on the continent.

The new ideas of culture which books like *Il Cortegiano* represented, and the new and passionate phases of life to be found expressed in the Italian novelle, not only, as I have suggested, broadened the intellectual and emotional experience of English writers, but gave to those writers valuable lessons in style and method of composition. Beginning with what were literally transcriptions, so far as invention was concerned, the translators themselves came, by 1580, to have a considerable independence.⁶ Along with the process of translation there went the process of adaptation; and both

related. Fenton, not content with torturing his tales out of all resemblance to fiction by means of his discursive sermonizing within the tales themselves, added, to that, copious remarks along his margins.

⁵ In the case of Pettie they are not to be taken seriously at all.

⁶ In 1573 George Gascoigne, pretending to translate from an Italian author, Bartello by name, wrote *The Adventures of Master F. J.*, the first of the English novels. Certain of Pettie's tales (*A Petite Pallace of Pettie his Pleasure*, 1576. Ed. Gollancz, The King's Classics Series. *Tereus and Progne*, Vol. I. *Scilla and Minos*, Vol. II.) are not by any means slavish followings of their originals. Barnabe Riche, in a collection of eight tales was himself the author of five of them. (*Riche his Farewell to Militarie Profession*, 1581. Shak. Soc. Pub., Vol. XVI.) "To the Readers in generall: . . . The histories . . . are eight in number, whereof the first, the seconde, the fift, the seventh and eight, are tales that are but forged onely for delight, neither credible to be beleved, not hurtfull to be perused. The third, the fourth, and the sixt, are Italian histories."

of these resulted in original production. The significance of all three is in the fact that, while the English writers were thus following models, they were at the same time acquiring a knowledge of prose style. Their independence was far from complete, but the knowledge which they got was at least valuable in the production of such stories as satisfied the instinct for edification, both moral and cultural.

So much, then, had been accomplished when, following out the tradition of narrative form for didactic purpose, Lyly wrote his *Euphues*, the novel with which the first stage of the development of Elizabethan prose fiction was inaugurated. *Euphues*, it is well to recall for purposes of comparison a little later, is the story of a young Athenian who comes to Naples. There he is given some sound advice on the subject of conduct. Presently he meets Philautus, with whom he is soon on intimate terms of friendship. Philautus introduces him to Lucilla, his betrothed. *Euphues* and Lucilla fall in love and the friendship with Philautus is broken. It is not long, however, before Lucilla deserts *Euphues* for one Curio, just as she had deserted Philautus for *Euphues*. Then *Euphues*, a wiser man, having renewed his friendship with Philautus, betakes himself to Greece, becomes a hermit, and sends forth letters upon various subjects to his various friends.

Lyly intended to write a treatise. His real purpose, as Mr. Bond says,⁷ "was to string together moral reflections on grave subjects, the gathered results of various reading." Lyly was concerned with the inculcation of ideas. Matters of education, friendship, religion, love-making, conduct, travel, and so forth, he discussed with the seriousness that pertains to questions of real moment. These things were vital to him, and indispensable. From sources here and there, from

⁷ *The Complete Works of John Lyly*. Ed. by R. W. Bond. Clarendon Press, 1902. Introductory Essay to *Euphues*. Vol. I, p. 159.

Cicero, Plutarch, Erasmus, Guevara, from his own thought, too, he collected opinions and discourses on social affairs. Some of these he translated just as he found them; some he adapted to suit his purpose. The *Anatomy of Wyt* is, therefore, "rather an essay in philosophy than in fiction proper." But it is not wholly so. The compilation thus made Lyly cast into narrative form. As such it has serious defects, want of action, poverty of imagination, lack of human interest. In spite of its imperfections as narrative, however, — in spite, one might say, of the very didacticism which called it forth — *Euphues* is a novel, an excellent "prototype of the novel with a purpose."

Of the style of the celebrated work we shall not speak, its structural and ornamental devices — anthitheses, rhetorical questions, alliterations, puns; historical and mythological allusions, similes from natural and unnatural history, proverbs, set discourses, soliloquies, "passions," asides to the reader, letters, misogynist tirades. All this is too well known on its own account to make necessary anything more than the mention of it as the conscious effort to please men desiring to "heare finer speach then the language would allow." There can, indeed, be only one purpose in calling attention to Lyly's work at all, the purpose, namely, of taking advantage of its familiarity to the reader as a means of summing up more distinctly, perhaps, than would otherwise be possible, the state of the novel when Greene put forth his first production.

(A) MAMILLIA

The *First Part of Mamillia* (lic. 1580), the earliest extant work from Greene's pen, is the only one of his novels (together with the *Anatomie of Lovers Flatteries* appended to the *Second Part*, 1583; and a few elements in the *Second Part* itself) of which the form was cast in the mold set by Lyly. But though Greene only once chose *Euphues* as the model for his

own work, there is no doubt that he wrote *Mamillia* with Lyly's novel, and Lyly's success, in mind. *Mamillia* has come from the court of Venice to be at her father's house in Padua. She receives a letter from a friend at court as to matters of conduct. At her father's house, one Pharicles sees her, falls in love with her, and wins her affection. Shortly afterward Pharicles sees Publia, woos, and wins her. Thus treacherously engaged to both ladies at once, and fearing the outcome of such faithlessness, he decides to leave the country. He does so, leaving behind two faithful women, both of whom, in spite of his fickleness, remain constant in their affection. Publia in the *Second Part* enters a convent; Mamillia — a radical departure from *Euphues* — marries Pharicles.

The plot of *Mamillia* differs in many respects from that of *Euphues*; still the general plan is much the same. Corresponding to Euphues' departure from Athens, we have Mamillia's departure from the court to her father's house. The fundamental theme of infidelity is the same with sexes reversed. This reversal is often carried out in details. Euphues goes from home to gain worldly experience. Mamillia is away from home in the midst of temptations, and goes home in order to avoid them. When Euphues arrives in Naples, he is offered advice, which he haughtily rejects. Mamillia is offered advice, which she accepts and earnestly tries to follow. The reversal is carried, also, to the main characters. In *Euphues* there are two faithful male, and one faithless female, characters; in *Mamillia* there are two faithful female, and one faithless male, characters. Corresponding to the fact that Euphues met Lucilla through Philautus' introduction is the fact that it was Mamillia who introduced Pharicles to Publia. Corresponding to the quarrel between Euphues and Philautus when Euphues falls in love with Lucilla, there is the falling out between Mamillia and Publia when Pharicles and Publia fall in love. Corresponding

to Euphues' secluding himself at Silexedra is Publia's entrance into a convent. And corresponding to Euphues' letters, are the letters of Mamillia to her friend, the Lady Modesta. This definite parallelism is sufficient to show what I mean in saying that *Mamillia* is planned upon *Euphues*.⁸

Not in form only, but also in purpose, was Greene's first novel written in very obvious emulation of Lyly. Although he did not follow the exact type again, Greene began to write in accordance with the prominent tradition of the time; and this tradition involved not only the form of *Euphues*, but its aim as well. Lyly's purpose was primarily didactic. His method, ostensibly that of narrative, has some of the interest which arises from pure narrative. The underlying principle, however, is of another kind. Lyly was too close to the older school of Painter and Fenton, too thoroughly imbued with the newly acquired ideas of the Renaissance, to be able to project a work of fiction which should be free from the encumbering didacticism of the treatise. I do not mean that he should have been wholly free from it. The contrast is not between didacticism and entertainment pure and simple, but between a crude didacticism which comes from a failure to assimilate ideas sufficiently to secure a true perspective, and an artistic criticism of life. A notable work of fiction can never be mere entertainment. But Lyly was so filled with the significance of the new culture, and of the refinement and polish of expression, that he mistook these subordinate for the prominent elements. His purpose was not first to create a novel in our modern sense of the word, with its artistic proportion

⁸ Another very close following of *Euphues* is the opening part of Lodge's *Euphues Shadow*, 1592. (The Complete Works of Thomas Lodge. Ed. by Gosse, Vol. II.) The latter part of Lodge's story is entirely different, but the opening situation is identical with that of *Euphues*.

both of pleasure and of criticism, but to open new matters of polite thought, manners, conversation, to the minds of the English court.

Greene, although he omits Lyly's element of satire, also was aiming at edification. He was carrying on in *Mamillia* the tradition of the treatise. As well as Lyly, he perceived the value of refinement in thought, of elegance in expression, and of a consciousness of endeavor to make culture a part of the life and speech of the English people. That end he saw accomplished by Lyly; and he tried, upon the model of his predecessor, to bring about the same result. His method was narration; his end, instruction. He has given us therefore a novel which is not, on the whole, unlike *Euphues*.⁹

This is not saying that we are to attach to *Mamillia* the same significance that we give to Lyly's work. Although, as Mr. Bond¹⁰ admirably points out, Lyly found at hand practically all the elements, both of style and content, which he combined to produce *Euphues*, he is nevertheless to be given credit as a pioneer in that he first created what is worthy to be regarded seriously as a work of fiction. In this sense, Lyly's novel is more important than Greene's. It is the more important, too, on its intrinsic merits. There is in it a somewhat firmer handling of the materials, a deeper

⁹ In view of such a purpose and such a production, we can hardly agree with the statement of Mr. Gosse when he said, in speaking of *Mamillia*, "It is to Greene to whom the credit is due of first writing a book wholly devoted to fictitious adventure in prose." (Hunterian Club. The Complete Works of Thomas Lodge. Ed. by Edmund Gosse, 1883. Introduction, Vol. I., p. 11.) To characterize *Mamillia* — the *First Part* at least — as "fictitious adventure" and thus to distinguish it from *Euphues*, is, it seems to me, utterly to misinterpret the nature of the work.

¹⁰ The Complete Works of John Lyly. Ed. by R. Warwick Bond, Clarendon Press. 1902.

understanding of motive, a more effective grasp upon the meaning of character. Not only this, perhaps because of this, it is more mature, more steady in its aim and in its method.

We are not, however, to be blind to the importance of Greene's work, nor to discount it too much from the fact that it is directly a copy. *Mamillia* has most of the imperfections of the time, infinite niceties of Euphuistic phrasing, tendency to clog the narrative with pedantic speeches and conversations, shallowness of characterization. But superficial as it is, it is not ineffective. Publia, Mamillia, and Pharicles are more than just the inverse portraits of Philautus, Euphues, and Lucilla. For all that Pharicles' trouble of mind over his inconstancy is not, upon examination, very convincing, it will endure a cursory reading.¹¹ And if the narrative element is slight (it must be remembered that we are discussing the *First Part* only; the *Second Part* belongs with the romances), it has at the same time a certain degree of rapidity. Pharicles meets Publia immediately upon his acceptance by Mamillia. The whole situation indeed is more cleverly conceived than in Lyly. Philautus takes Euphues to Lucilla for the purpose of introducing him to her. The introduction is, obviously, to make opportunity to reveal Lucilla's fickleness. In Greene, on the other hand, the introduction is manifestly accidental. Pharicles is walking with Mamillia for the sake of urging his suit. It happens that she is going to Publia's house. Pharicles goes along. Inasmuch as Mamillia has just granted her love by the time they arrive, we are dumbfounded at Pharicles' sudden passion for Publia. The events that follow, too, occur in quick succession; almost before we know it, Pharicles is betrothed to both, and off and away to Sicily.

¹¹ Dr. Wolff (Eng. St., Vol. 37, p. 358) thinks that *Mamillia* contains some of Greene's best characterization.

The apparent fortuitousness of Pharicles' meeting with Publia illustrates what I think is Greene's advance over Lyly. It shows, on Greene's part, a realization of what narrative, as distinct from treatise, demands. *Euphues* is a treatise which came near being a story; *Mamillia* is a story which retains much of the treatise. Although he was striving to imitate Lyly, Greene's nature led him to a slightly different result. He put into a minor relation the very things for the sake of which, perhaps, he wrote the book, and elevated those which his fundamental interest in events inevitably made prominent. Even in his first production, when his purpose was to teach, he developed the ability, which he was later to develop more consciously, of producing work with real narrative art. *Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci*. Lyly, it may be said, had stressed the *utile*. Greene found the value of the *dulci*. Such a discovery in those days was no small thing for a lad of twenty.

(B) THE FRAME-WORK TALES

It was one of Greene's most deep-rooted characteristics to write what he thought he would have a market for. All through his life he was doing that. "After I had by degrees proceeded Maister of Arts," we are told, ". . . I became . . . a penner of Love Pamphlets . . . who for that trade growne so ordinary about London as Robin Greene."¹² The statement comes from the supersensitive brain of a dying man, but the truth of it applies elsewhere to Greene's work. Literature was a trade to him, an activity to be followed shrewdly in order to be followed successfully.

Fiction, in 1580, was didactic. Greene would therefore be didactic. *Euphues* was very popular. Greene would

¹² *Repentance*, Vol. XII., p. 17-23.

write a novel like it. Such seems to have been the origin of *Mamillia*. It was none of Greene's intention, when he began, to do more than disguise the similarity between his pamphlet and its model. Every one still felt the need of being didactic, or at least of pretending to be so,¹³ and Greene meant to follow fashion and be as didactic as the rest.¹⁴ Incidentally he discovered the power of ordering events in a way to give real narrative interest. The story did not exactly run away with him; but it broke loose.

There is in Greene's work a balancing between two purposes. His desire always to be in fashion brought about these results,—one coming from his conscious aim to instruct, the other developing as a by-product into a freedom of art. *Mamillia* marks the first stage. The romances mark the last. Between the two, both in time and in relationship, are the frame-work tales which form the subject of this division of the chapter.

To the composition of the frame-work tales the Italian Renaissance contributed the two elements which characterize this branch of Greene's work. There was the influence which came from the Dialogues, like Bembo's *Gli Asolani* and Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano*; and which, we saw earlier in the chapter, was already felt in England even before the

¹³ See an example in the *Adventures of Master F. J.*, which Gascoigne concludes in these words: "Thus we see that where wicked lust doeth beare the name of love, it doth not onely infecte the lyght-minded, but it maye also become confusion to others which are vowed to constancie. And to that end I have recyted this Fable, which may serue as ensample to warne the youthfull reader from attempting the lyke worthless enterprise." (Gascoigne. Ed. W. C. Hazlitt. Roxburghe Library, 1869. Vol. I., p. 486.)

¹⁴ "I will take in hand to discourse of, (Obedience) that both we may beguyle the night with prattle, and profite our mynds by some good and vertuous precepts." *Penelopes Web*, p. 162. A characteristic statement of Greene.

time of Greene. In the Dialogue of this type, the purpose was cultural; the center of interest was on what was said rather than upon what was done, — upon polite conversation, discussions upon questions of morality, love, fortune, and so forth; and the emphasis was about equally divided between the frame-work and the included matter. There was, too, the influence of the frame-work tale proper, of the kind represented by Boccaccio's *Decameron*. Works of this sort tended to minimize the importance of the frame-work and to throw the emphasis upon the included stories. The purpose was that of entertainment more than of culture.

We may begin with *Morando, the Tritameron of Love*. *Morando* resembles the treatise in its purpose. Perhaps it should not even be called a novel at all. The Lady Panthia, accompanied by her three daughters and three young gentlemen, is spending three days at the house of Morando. On each day a discussion occurs:¹⁵ first, Love doth much, but money doth all; second, Whether or not it is good to love; third, Whether women or men are more subject to love. Hence the title — after the fashion of the *Decameron* and the *Heptameron* — the “Tritameron” of Love. Each question is debated by one of the young couples. Considerable opportunity is offered for a certain brilliancy of conversation and repartee; and while there is no action, there is some interest in the development of the characters. By the time the three days' discussion is over, one of the young men has fallen in love with one of the young ladies. Then all go to Panthia's house in town, from where, if Greene hears what

¹⁵ *Morando* and several other novels of the group are thus examples of the *dubii*, or discussions particularly of the more subtle questions of love, which constituted for many decades a very popular amusement in polite circles. They dealt with just such topics as are proposed in *Morando*, and were very widespread in the literature of the Renaissance, not only in Italy but elsewhere.

success Silvestro had, he will let us have news. Greene heard — as he always did in such cases — of Silvestro's success, and so had plenty of reason to publish the *Second Part*. This second part carries on the love affair to its happy conclusion. Thus the story forms a setting in which are embedded some further discourses, this time not upon love, but upon fortune and upon friendship.¹⁶

Even so brief an analysis will serve to show the nature of the work. It can be seen at once that the *Tritameron* has more story than is to be found in the treatises proper, but is yet distinctly akin to them. The purpose of it is not narrative primarily, but didactic,—designed to give expression to, and to infuse into the English mind, certain thoughts upon cultural subjects, however conventional those thoughts and purposes might be or might become.

Of all the group, *Morando* takes the extreme place in the direction of cultural intention. Next to it are the pam-

¹⁶ Mr. Hart (Notes and Queries. 10th Ser. No. 5, pp. 343, 443, 444.) has pointed out that these discourses are not original with Greene. They were extracted by him from Primaudaye's *Academy*. Primaudaye was born about 1545 of a family of Anjou, and was a man of considerable renown in his own time. His works were chiefly of a religious nature. The *Academy* was translated in 1586 by Thomas Bowes as the "*Platonical Academy & Schoole of Moral Philosophy*." Greene frequently made use of Bowes' translation. The discourse on Friendship (Vol. III., pp. 146-60) is taken from Primaudaye, Chap. XIII, "Of Friendship and a Friend." Ten lines of Primaudaye are lifted bodily. "First we say with Socrates that . . . (12 lines skipped) . . . Friendship is a communion," etc. The discourse of Peratio upon Fortune (pp. 128-39) is from Primaudaye, Chap. XLIV. Greene omits Primaudaye's account of Tamburlaine. The discussion on marriage (pp. 164-6) is, incidentally, from Primaudaye, Chap. XLV. The sexes are changed, for whereas Primaudaye writes against women, Greene is arguing for them.

After 1586 many of Greene's writings show large verbal borrowings from Primaudaye.

phlets which make up Greene's largest body of work. These are the frame-work tales which have stories within themselves in illustration of the ideas brought out in the discussion. Closest to *Morando* in didactic elements is *Farewell to Follie*.¹⁷ Signior Farnese goes, with his wife and three daughters and four young gentlemen, into the country. There they discuss Follie in a series of discourses and illustrative tales. From the fact that the three forms of Follie talked of are Pride, Lust, and Gluttony, and from the fact that there are seven young people in the company, it is surely not unreasonable to suppose with Professor Morley¹⁸ that Greene had in mind to make the *Farewell to Follie* a treatise on the seven deadly sins.¹⁹

The title-page of the *Censure to Philautus* is undoubtedly the best comment upon that work:

"Euphues his censure to Philautus. Wherein is presented a philosophical combat betweene Hector and Achylles, discovering in foure discourses, interlaced with diverse delightfull Tragedies, The vertues necessary to be incident in every gentleman: had in question at the

¹⁷ This pamphlet is often spoken of in connection with the so-called repentance novels. The only way in which it can be so connected with them (the way in which it usually is connected with the repentances) is by the prefaces. The prefaces, however, have nothing to do with the work itself, unless the anatomizing of folly be called "repentance." So far as the work itself is concerned, it does in reality belong with the treatise-narrative group.

¹⁸ *English Writers*, Vol. X., pp. 94-5.

¹⁹ Mr. Hart (Notes and Queries, Ser. 10, No. 5) cites twenty or more passages taken directly from Primaudaye. Among the most important of these are the passages on marriage (Vol. IX., pp. 327-8) which are taken from Primaudaye (Chap. XLV.) and the Tale of Cosimo (Vol. IX., p. 298) which Greene develops into a story from the headings of the tale of Menon in Primaudaye (Chap. XLVII.) In no other work does Greene borrow so extensively from Primaudaye. In *Farewell to Follie* he also made use of *Laneham's Letter* (1575). Passage (Vol. IX., p. 265) is taken from Laneham (Burn's reprint, 1821, p. 29, corrected by Furnivall in Ballad Society, p. 22. 1871).

siege of Troy betwixt sondry Grecian and Trojan Lords: especially debated to discour the perfection of a souldier., Containing mirth to purge melancholy, holsome precepts to profit maners, neither unsauorie to youth for delight, nor offensive to age for scurrilitie. Ea habentur optima quae & Iucunda, honesta, & utilia."

The purpose, as can be seen, is similar to that of Castiglione's work, in this case to set forth the qualities of the perfect soldier. The emphasis is only apparently upon the didactic; really the narrative elements were more important in Greene's own mind. For one-fifth of the novel is given to the frame-work and the background — the meetings of the Greeks and Trojans, both soldiers and women, in a time of truce; and the consequent talking back and forth,²⁰ with the final decision on the part of the men to "discover" an ideal member of their own profession. One-fifth is devoted to the set speeches such as were found in the *Tritameron of Love*, in this instance on Wisdom, Fortitude, and Liberality, the three essentials of perfection in arms. And three-fifths are consumed in the relating of the "delightfull Tragedies."²¹

²⁰ Professor Herford (New Shak. Soc. Ser. 1, Pt. 2, p. 186) thinks there is some relation between Greene's conception of Cressida, as she is shown to us here, and Shakespeare's. Greene's, he says, more nearly approaches Shakespeare's manner than any other version in its conception of the heroine. Greene speaks of Cressida who was "tickled a little with a selfe conceit of her owne wit" (Vol. VI., p. 166) — a suggestion of the pert, impudent, ingenious Cressida of Shakespeare.

I think we can agree that there is this similarity between the two Cressidas. But I do not believe we can go so far as to say with Grosart (Englische Studien 22:403) that "Shakespeare's treatment of 'Troy's tale divine' in Troilus and Cressida is drawn from Euphues his Censure."

²¹ How definitely Greene meant to convey the impression that he was writing a treatise can be seen by his own remark in his preface where, attributing the work to Euphues, he speaks of it as a work "wherein under the shadow of a philosophical combat betweene Hector

Belonging with the *Censure to Philautus* and yet going a step farther toward an openly expressed delight in the story elements are *Penelopes Web*, dating from the same year (1587), expressly a "Christall Myrror of faeminine perfection" intended to set forth the virtues of womankind in the same way that the *Censure* sets forth the idea of the perfect soldier;²² *Alcida*,²³ in which the principal character is an old woman who tells the stories of her three daughters, revealing three vanities, Pride, Inconstancy, and Proneness to Gossip, the "discourse" confirmed with "diverse merry and delightfull Histories";²⁴ *Planetomachia*, a discussion with

and Achilles, imitating Tullies orator, Platoes common wealth, Baldesars courtier, he aymeth at the exquisite portraiture of a perfect martialist." Vol. VI., p. 152.

²² A part of the title-page reads: "In three several discourses also are three especiall vertues, necessary to be incident in every vertuous woman, pithely discussed: namely Obedience, Chastitie, and Sylence: Interlaced with three severall and Comicall Histories. By Robert Greene, Maister of Arts in Cambridge."

Penelopes Web has borrowings from Primaudaye's *Academy*. (Hart, Notes and Queries. 10th Ser. No. 5.)

²³ Brie (*Englische Studien*, 42: 217 ff.) attempts to determine the date of Lyly's *Love's Metamorphosis* on the ground of its connection with *Alcida*. Without raising the question of the date of Lyly's play, I fail to see any such intimate relationship between the novel and the play as in any way to think the former the source of the latter. Both involve metamorphoses, to be sure, but the similarity scarcely goes beyond that point.

²⁴ Storojenko (*Grosart's Greene*, Vol. I., p. 95) is puzzled as to what should have caused Greene "to change his front so suddenly, and to send the shafts of his wit against the very sex which he had always so highly lauded." Storojenko is linking together Nashe's epithet, "Homer of women," (Nashe's Works, Ed. McKerrow, Vol. I., p. 12) and Greene's own words in *Mamillia* (Vol. II., pp. 106-7) where Greene sets himself up against the slanderers of women. To be puzzled about a seeming change of front is to take Greene too seriously. In the first place, speeches against women are to be found in *Mamillia* itself (Vol. II., pp. 54, 221-2), and in other works of Greene. In the second

an elaborate preface on the influence of the planets,²⁵ containing two tales by Saturn and Venus, each divinity to prove that the influence of the other is the more malignant in the actions of men,—a theme similar to that of Lyly's *Woman in the Moon*.

There are two more novels in the group, *Perymedes* and *Orpharion*. These are at the opposite extreme from *Morando*. For while there is a semblance of a purpose for having a frame-work — in the case of *Perymedes* to set forth a picture of contented lowly life; in *Orpharion* to show a cure for love — the stories which make up the novels are told for their own sake. This, in spite of the fact that Greene in all solemnity declares that *Perymedes* illustrates "a golden methode how to use the minde in pleasant and profitable exercise;" and that in *Orpharion* "as in a Diatheeron, the branches of Vertue, ascending and descending by degrees: are counited in the glorious praise of women-kind."

In form, *Greene's Vision* is a frame-work pamphlet. But the tales are really incidental both in proportion and in interest, although one of them, the *Tale of Tompkins*, is among the most skilful of Greene's stories. The *Vision*, being an account of a religious experience, may therefore be dis-

place, it is not known that Nashe is referring to Greene at all (Nashe, Ed. McKerrow, Vol. IV., p. 14). And in the third place, *Alcida* is not necessarily a misogynic pamphlet. It is not against women in general. It is merely against certain faults in women's natures—simply a didactic narrative.

²⁵ This preface is not original with Greene. He gets it from Pontano's dialogue called *Aegidius* (Prose Works, Venice, 1519, Vol. II.). "At the beginning of *Planetomachia*, Greene takes over nearly *verbatim*, in the original Latin, seven pages of this dialogue (beginning at page 168), substituting his own name "*Robertus Grenus*" and that of his friend "*Franciscus Handus*," for the names of *Pardus* and *Franciscus Pudericus* respectively, wherever these occur in the original." (S. L. Wolff. Eng. St. Vol. 37, p. 333, note 1.)

cussed in the next chapter among the repentance pamphlets. Strictly speaking, two others of Greene's novels, *Never too Late*, with its sequel, *Francescos Fortunes*, and *Arbasto*, belong with this group. But for the reason that these two novels contain only one tale each, and that in both novels the included tales so put the frame-work out of mind as to make it entirely negligible, they are best considered in the groups where they properly belong, the latter with the romances, the former with the prodigal-son stories.

✓ The interest of these pamphlets for the modern reader is, in most cases, in the tales. It is the interest which arises from the narrative rather than from the didactic elements. This probably was less true to Greene's contemporaries. Although the frame-work is not entirely without significance even for us, to them it was, no doubt, the more vital part. For Greene imbued it with considerable of the spirit of Renaissance thought, and he conveyed through it to his readers much that was essentially cultural in content and in aim. He was, then, not merely the writer of didactic frame-works embellished with incidental tales; he was an apostle of the new learning and all that it represented. He was journalistic, he made his living by putting out these pamphlets. But such considerations do not alter the fact that he did much, along with earning his bread, to familiarize his readers with ideas of refinement in conversation and life, with precepts of morality, with questions of sentiment and passion, with discourses on the virtues and vices of mankind.²⁶

There are in all more than twenty of the included tales.

²⁶ For a full discussion of this subject of Greene as an introducer of Italian culture see Dr. S. L. Wolff's article (published in *Englische Studien*, 1906-7, Vol. 37) entitled, "Robert Greene and the Italian Renaissance." Dr. Wolff discusses the influence of the Renaissance upon Greene as being of two kinds; that which Greene assimilated in such a way as to treat imaginatively in his own work, such as plots

The tabulation of them in chronological order will show in the most concrete way possible the range of subject and genre.²⁷ Such a tabulation, however, shows nothing of the structure or of the excellence of Greene's work. It may be well, then, to illustrate Greene's narrative art.

We may take the story of *Tompkins the Wheelwright*, for example, — Chaucer's Tale in *Greenes Vision* (Vol. XII.). This tale belongs to the old fabliau type, which is in itself well freed from ethical purpose. It is not the aim of the type to portray character, except incidentally, or to bear instruction. The good fabliau is primarily narrative, consisting always of a well-knit story. It is clear even when it is elaborate. Its method is straightforward, ever selecting the significant detail necessary to forward the action. It is compact, unadorned, effective.

Near Cambridge lived a wheelwright named Tompkins. He fell in love with a dairymaid who sold cream in Cambridge. Her name was Kate. She loved him too, and her father consented to the marriage. Kate continued to sell her cream. Tompkins became jealous of the scholars at Cambridge and finally became jealous of everybody. Kate perceived his jealousy and was grieved. She was friendly with a scholar whom she asked to rid her husband of jealousy. They devised a plan.

On Friday Tompkins took his wife to her father's while he went to Cambridge. He met a scholar who asked him where he lived. He said at Grandchester. Scholar asked if he knew Tompkins, the wheelwright. Tompkins said

and motifs; and that which he used but did not so assimilate — ideas about science, literature, education, politics, society, which became a part of his mental content and changed his views of life, and adventitious material which enlarged his stock of information and furnished literary ornament.

²⁷ See Appendix I.

he was his neighbor. Scholar said that Tompkins was the most famous cuckold in the country, and offered to prove the statement the next day when Kate was in town. Tompkins was to meet the scholar at an inn.

The next day Tompkins bade his wife go to market, for he was ill, he said. Then he went to Cambridge to the inn. He met the scholar, and they went to a chamber window. Tompkins saw his wife sitting on a scholar's lap eating cherries. Then he and the scholar drank together. Tompkins was given a sleeping potion, and they all made merry, while Tompkins slept. Late at night they carried Tompkins home.

About midnight he awoke and began to rail at his wife. Then he saw that he was at home in bed, and he could not understand it. He said that he had seen his wife on a scholar's lap, eating cherries. They persuaded him that he had been very ill, and that it was all mere fancy. Thus was Tompkins cured of his jealousy.

The Tale of the Farmer Bridegroom in Groatworth of Wit belongs in the class with that of Tompkins. Not all of Greene's tales, however, rank with these two. Some of them are poorly done and dull; indeed the fact cannot be overlooked that, however popular in its day, much of Greene's work is commonplace to us. But every man has the right to be measured by his highest attainments. In the final consideration there is this quality which demands recognition. When he is at his best, Greene is able to tell a story well. He has an understanding of what a plot is, and he makes his narrative move. Most of Greene's work is of course impeded by Euphuistic ornament and didactic talk, but the *story* is usually well conceived and developed.

Entirely different is the tale of Valdracko, — Venus' Tragedie in *Planetomachia*. Valdracko, Duke of Ferrara, was a crabbed man. Though he was just and politic as a ruler, he

was not liked privately. He trusted no one. Valdracko had a daughter called Pasylla, who was loved by Rodento, son of Il Conte Coelio, Valdracko's bitter enemy. (The love affair is long drawn out.) One day Valdracko went to his daughter's room to speak to her. She was not there, but he found one of Rodento's letters and Pasylla's answer to it. He made up his mind to be avenged on the family of Coelio.

There was a great meeting of the nobles of Ferrara. Valdracko asked Coelio to stay after the meeting, and made proffer of reconciliation. The proffer was accepted, to the joy of the Senate, and Valdracko took Coelio home with him to dinner. He called his daughter to him and told her of his plan for her to marry Rodento. Pasylla said she was willing, Rodento was sent for, and the marriage was arranged for the next spring.

Meantime Valdracko decided to hire a ruffian to murder Coelio. Within a few days the ruffian had killed Coelio with a pistol. But he was captured, and brought before the Senate. Valdracko, pretending great sorrow at his friend's death, ordered the man's tongue cut out. Pasylla and Rodento were greatly grieved at Coelio's death. Valdracko had the murderer put to death in torment. Soon after, Rodento and Pasylla were married with much ceremony, and Valdracko spent great sums of money upon the marriage feast.

After five months Valdracko began thinking how he might be rid of Rodento. He went to a house of his three miles from Ferrara, from where he sent a letter to his cup-bearer to poison Rodento, promising great reward. The cup-bearer carried out the orders the next morning. Within four hours Rodento died. Pasylla was greatly grieved. The cup-bearer had pangs of conscience. He gave her her father's letter, and died. When Valdracko came home he pretended sorrow for Rodento's death, but Pasylla had vowed revenge.

When he had gone to sleep, she went to his chamber and bound him to his bed. She awakened him and killed him with a sword. She took pen and ink and wrote out the story; then she killed herself with the same sword.

This tale is distinctly a product of the Italian Renaissance. It might well be — and may be, for all anybody knows — a translation of one of the novelle. The story is full of Italian incidents and motifs:²⁸ murders, revenge, treachery. It has in it passion of love and hate, intensity of movement. That the action is somewhat slow in starting must be admitted, being delayed by the conventionality of the process of young people's falling in love. But once set going the trend of events is sure, the movement steady toward the tragic end.

The principal characters are of course Valdracko and Pasylla, the father and his beautiful daughter. About Pasylla there is nothing of particular import. She is passionate and faithful in her love; and she is unflinching in her revenge. But Greene does not present her differentiated from the type of beautiful heroines who can, on occasion, show a ferocious fortitude — the gentle lady murderers so common in the literature of the Renaissance. Nor does he imbue her with a personality so distinct as to arouse in us genuine sympathy for her revenge or for her death.

Valdracko, too, is only a type. But he is a type which comes very near to being a character. He is a man impla-

²⁸ "The story of Valdracko, in *Planetomachia*, is full of Italian motifs. That of the old woman go-between who transmits to the lover what is ostensibly his own love letter disdainfully returned, but what is really an encouraging reply, may well have come from Boccaccio's story of the confessor as go-between — Decam. III., 3 (not noticed by Koepel). There is, too, a typical Italian poisoning, and a general family slaughter — father killing son-in-law, daughter killing father and herself — which recalls Cinthio's tragedy of *Orbecche*, or his narrative version of the same story in *Hecatomm.* II., 2." (Wolff, Eng. Stud., Vol. 37, p. 346, note 1.)

cable in his hatred. There is no sacrifice too great, be it his own daughter. There is no treachery too violent. Greene has presented us with a unified conception. Valdracko is consistently portrayed — with one exception. We cannot understand the depth of his motive as co-ordinate with the terribleness of his actions. We cannot feel that Valdracko moves wholly from within. To the extent that he is moved by his creator he falls short of real personality.

We are here making one of our most serious criticisms upon Greene's art in fiction. Greene gets hold, to a remarkable degree, of the nature of narrative so far as the choice and arrangement of events is concerned. His sense for action is strong. His ability in characterization, on the other hand, is not so well developed. He seldom presents more than types. Although his presentation is often a refinement upon that of his predecessors, and although he succeeds in idealizing certain kinds of personality, his characterization is always, in his novels, inadequate. Greene has not enough insight into the depths of human nature to gain a full conception of the sources of action. He does not relate sufficiently a motive for conduct, and the conduct itself.

This is a serious criticism. But to say so, is not also to say that it is a severe one. We must remember that in 1585 Shakespeare had not begun to write, that Marlowe had produced nothing, that Kyd had not even written the *Spanish Tragedy*. Greene had few models in English Literature,²⁹ for no one had yet opened the eyes of English men of letters to a realization of what it was possible to do in the creation of character when creative power was at its highest. Greene's supreme achievement is Valdracko, which, we have said, falls short. Greene had not intensity enough of imagi-

²⁹ Sidney's *Arcadia* with its minute and keen analysis of character was written before 1585, but there is no way of knowing whether Greene had read it.

nation to raise him above the sphere of type into the sphere of personality; so the story of Valdracko remains a tale, — not a tragedy. But the wonder is not that Greene failed.

In conclusion, my discussion of the frame-work tales may require a word of explanation. Greene's career in fiction, chronologically, was from the treatise to the romance, — from the *utile* to the *dulci*, through the frame-work tales, which were both. In view of that general development I have taken up the frame-work tale as a progression from the one extreme to the other. It must be remembered that I have done so only for the sake of classification and clearness. The order here is not at all that in which they were written.

We can easily be led astray by the evolutionary idea in the case of a man like Greene whose work in fiction as a whole does, at first sight, seem to have been the result of a conscious development. For we have first *Mamillia*, the didactic treatise; then about 1586 and '87 a series of frame-work tales; and finally in 1588 and '89 a group of romances, narratives pure and simple. The division, however, is by no means exact. Greene's second work, for instance, was a romance. And so was his third, and his fourth — this last in a prodigal-son frame-work. Moreover, after he had left romances, and had turned to another form of writing, Greene appeared with one of the most didactic of his frame-work tales. Such considerations prevent any belief that Green's novels represent a real progression in his mind.

The development, if there had been one, would have been in accordance with Greene's natural ability. His real power, if he had only known it, was in narrative. But as I shall have occasion to state later, Greene did not fully realize wherein his talent lay. He developed technique, methods of meeting definite problems of literary presentation and expression. In this sense there is distinct progress in his work. Of the difference, however, between the two elements of the

frame-work tale he seems to have been unaware. The cultural element of the frame-work was quite as significant as the included tale. He felt no need — there isn't much, for that matter, — for drawing a distinction between didacticism, which was his crude but only criticism of life, and the capability of giving pleasure which a work of art must have. We cannot, therefore, regard this division of Greene's work as more than a miscellaneous collection of pamphlets, most of them fortuitously centered around the year 1587. To him they were not in any way a link between the treatise and the artistic narrative.

(C) THE ROMANCES

From these frame-work tales, we pass to the next group of Greene's novels. This is the group which belongs to the romantic fiction that was prominent for several years during Greene's career. It is true that we most often associate the idea of this romantic fiction with that of Sidney's *Arcadia*. But the *Arcadia* is only one of the class of Elizabethan romances, which, influenced by various models, such as Italian and Spanish pastorals, were inspired chiefly by the translation of the Greek Romances.³⁰

The nature of the Greek Romances we need not take up at length, with their emphasis upon the picturesque, the rhetorical, the fanciful, the diversified, rather than the unified, expression of life. For the Greek Romancer we know that life moves not as a whole, governed by physical and moral law, and that, for him, events follow events not in relation of causation but of chance. The activities of life are unmotivated. There is no interaction between environment and

³⁰ In the discussion of Greene's relation to Greek Romance, I am much indebted to Dr. S. L. Wolff who has treated this subject with thoroughness in his *The Greek Romances in Elizabethan Fiction*. Columbia University Press, 1912.

human destiny, nor indeed between human character and human conduct. Sentiment is mere sentimentality; nature is mere spectacle. The dissociation of the ideas of cause and result leaves to Fortune the direction of human activity. To their incalculableness, the interest in events is due; and so the "paradoxical, the bizarre, the inconsistent, the self-contradictory — these were the stock in trade with the writers of Greek Romance." Such interests manifest themselves in style — antithesis, alliteration, parallelism, tendency to psychologize, elaborate pictures, trial-scenes, and debates; and they lead at once to a superabundance of episodic material. The subordination of plot and character, both often lost in digressions, elevates the significance of Fortune and of sentiment, against the first of which many a tirade is directed, and upon the second of which much energy of analysis is expanded.

Concerning the accessibility, too, of these romances to Greene, only a word is needed. The *Æthiopian History* of Heliodorus was current in Underdowne's translation even before Lyly wrote his *Euphues*. Angel Day published a version of the *Daphnis and Chloe* of Longus in 1587 which at once had its effect upon Greene. The first translation in English of Achilles Tatius' *Clitophon and Leucippe* was not made until 1597. That translation was too late to have any effect upon Elizabethan fiction, but there were versions of the romance in Latin, Italian,³¹ and French, which were well known in England before the time of Greene.

In speaking of the influence of the Greek Romances upon any one man in the Elizabethan period, however, it does not

³¹ Joseph de Perott (Mod. Lang. Notes, Vol. XXIX., No. 2, p. 63, Feb. 1914) believes that Greene used an Italian version of Achilles Tatius, as follows: *Di Achilli Tatic Alessandrino dell'amor di Leucippe et di Clitophonte libri otto Tradotti in volgare da Francesco Angelo Coccio. In Venetia, Appresso da Domenico, & Gio Battista Guerra, fratelli, 1563.*

seem to me that we must necessarily assume that all this influence came directly from the original romances. A particular author, Greene for instance, may not have taken, and probably did not take, every incident which is common to his works and to the Greek Romances straight from the Romances themselves. This influence was widespread throughout the literature of the continent; and by the time that Greene began to write, many of the most typical of the structural elements of Greek Romance had become a part of the flesh and bone of Elizabethan fiction. In many instances, moreover, the influence of mediæval romance must be taken into account in discussing the directness with which any particular element came into Elizabethan fiction.

These novels of Greene which show predominantly the influence of the Greek Romances have in them nothing which savors of the treatise. They may, as does *Pandosto*, "discour the triumph of time;" or, as *Menaphon*, "decipher the variable effects of Fortune, the wonders of Loue, the triumphs of inconstant time." But, although they were, according to their title-pages, printed for purposes of morality, they are fiction pure and simple, fiction of love, adventure, jealousy, separation, reunion of kindred, motivated largely by the caprice of Fortune and the wilfulness of man.

The tendency of Greek Romance to minimize character and motive, and to make Fortune become the basis of plot, was one which fitted in well with Greene's nature, for Greene had an eye to the narrative effect. In following out their influence he was free to give sway to his native interest in events, and he was at the same time relieved from any considerable problems of characterization. Fortune took all the responsibility to keep the story moving; she became the center around which were grouped various people and actions.

In this class of romantic fiction, we should include first of

all the *Second Part of Mamillia*. The *First Part*, as we have seen, belongs to the didactic type of *Euphues*. The *Second Part* is essentially romantic. After Pharicles has left Padua, the two faithful women constant still, he goes to Sicily. He grows into favor at the court, has various experiences, is denounced as a traitor by a courtesan of the place whom he has spurned, is cast into prison, condemned to die, and finally is rescued by Mamillia, the only character of the action of the *First Part*, besides Pharicles, who has any definite place in the action of the *Second Part*. Throughout the *Second Part*, there are many elements, to be sure, which come from *Euphues*, but the principal narrative is that of the romantic kind.

The *Second Part of Mamillia* was published in 1583. The following year Greene published two novels which are of this same type. One of them is *Arbasto*, the story which an old man living alone in a cell tells to a stranger. He had been a prince, he said. When he was on an expedition of war, he had fallen in love with his enemy's daughter. The princess did not return his affection; but her sister, whom the prince disregarded, fell in love with him. Because this sister released him from her father's prison, he dissembled love and took her with him to his own country. Later discovering that his love was only dissimulation, she died of grief. The haughty princess then took it into her head to love, but the prince spurned her as violently as he had formerly loved her. The nobles revolted to avenge his wife's death, and drove him from his throne. So he lives in his cell, throwing the blame for the whole affair upon Fortune, whom he spites by his contentment with a lowly lot. The *Carde of Fancie* belongs with this romantic group, but it is discussed elsewhere on account of its relation to the prodigal-son stories.²²

We come then to *Pandosto*, 1588. The germ of this ro-

²² Chap. III., p. 66.

mance probably goes back to an incident in the history of Poland and Bohemia.³³ A fourteenth century king, Siemowitsch, or Ziemowit, becoming suspicious of his Bohemian wife, put her into prison, where she bore a son. The queen was then strangled, and the son was sent away. The child was brought up by a peasant woman, and was finally restored to his father, who died deeply repentant in 1381. The story, it is thought, was carried to England at the time when Ann of Bohemia was married to Richard II.

Pandosto, in the general outline, follows the historical incident, except that it is a daughter, not a son, who is born in the prison. We do not know in what form the story came to Greene. It may have been in something of the shape that we have it from his pen, in which case the work may be only a retelling. Greene's romance, however, is distinctly of the Greek type. The historical elements easily fitted in with such a method of treatment. The nucleus was there. All that was needed was to gather about it an abundance of Greek structural elements.

That is what Greene did. He worked out, for example, quite in the method of Heliodorus, an elaborate trial-scene and the use of the oracle for the vindication of chastity. He borrowed from Longus the description of Fawnia's life among the shepherds after she was committed to the destiny of the sea, — the details of the Shepherd's finding her, her rural life, and her later disclosure to her father. There was added, too, the romantic story of the love of Fawnia and Dorastus,³⁴ son

³³ See Eng. Stud. for 1878, 1888, where the source of *Pandosto* is discussed by Caro. Also Herford, Eversley Shakespeare, Vol. IV., p. 265.

³⁴ De Perott (Englische Studien, 1908, p. 308) in an article, *Robert Greenes Entlehnung aus dem Ritterspiegel*, directs attention to what he calls a borrowing (*Pandosto* — Shak. Library. Vol. IV., p. 45, line 13 — p. 49, line 14) from *Le Chevalier du Soliel*, Vol. III., ff. 308-9). I fail to see any resemblance worthy to be called a "borrowing." The situation is one which might be found in any pastoral romance.

to the Egistus who had been the object of Pandosto's suspicions, and to the shores of whose kingdom Fortune brought the little outcast and her boat. He made this love the means of Fawnia's return, for he employed the structural device whereby the shipwreck of the eloping lovers brought Fawnia again home.³⁵

It is highly characteristic of Greene that *Pandosto* is his first pastoral. While pastoralism had already made, and was making, itself felt in England, Greene had not introduced it into his works. There was no particular, no immediate, demand for it. *Arbasto* and the *Carde of Fancie*, written earlier, are both free from the elements of shepherd's life. But in 1587 Angel Day's version of *Daphnis and Chloe* appeared, a work so distinctly pastoral as to direct Greene's energies to an attempt at something of the same kind. There is no doubt, therefore, that Angel Day is responsible for *Pandosto* and *Menaphon*, its successor of the following year.³⁶

In *Menaphon*, pastoralism is of much more importance than in *Pandosto*. The romance does not open with pastoral elements, to be sure, for the first part of it is devoted to telling of the pestilence in Arcadia, and of the ambiguous oracle. The purpose is of course to hurl us *in medias res*, but it is not realized. Without making his plan entirely clear, Greene leaves the opening situation and goes to another, the situation with which the line of action he is to develop really begins.

Menaphon, a shepherd, walking by the sea-shore, saw pieces of a wreck floating near, and on the shore an old man, and a woman with a child. He asked them who they were,

³⁵ For a more complete account of Greene's borrowings from Greek Romance see Wolff, p. 446 seq. In the same work see also a comparison of *Pandosto* and the *Winter's Tale*, pp. 451-2.

³⁶ "Greene's borrowings indicate clearly that he used a translation by Angel Day, for he takes from it several details not to be found in either the Greek or French version." Wolff, *Greek Romances*, p. 447.

and offered to help them. Sephestia called herself Samela of Cyprus, wife of a poor gentleman now dead; the old man was her servant. Menaphon took them home, and immediately fell in love with the beautiful stranger. Then the story goes on with Sephestia's life among the shepherds and shepherdesses, their courtships and petty fallings out, their songs and jigs.

One Melicertus hears of Samela and confesses his love. Both are troubled; for to each the other resembles the supposedly dead husband or wife. Meantime the child Pleusidippus is carried away by pirates to Thessaly, where he grows up as heir to the throne. Hearing of the Arcadian Samela, he comes to present himself as a suitor. Democles, the king, also comes to woo. Now, Democles is Samela's (Sephestia's) father. And Melicertus is Maximus, her husband, with whom she was forced to flee from the court to escape her father's wrath, but from whom she was separated by shipwreck. The plot is, then, that of a husband wooing his wife, a son wooing his mother, a father wooing his daughter, all of them royalty in disguise. Complications arise; blood is about to be shed. Then an old woman steps forth and explains the fulfilment of the ambiguous prophecy.

The story as it stands is considerable of a mixture from several sources. The central idea, we may suppose, Greene got from Warner's tale of Argentile and Curan in *Albion's England*.³⁷ At least he probably got from that tale the idea of royal persons meeting in the disguise of the shepherd life, and failing to recognize each other. Even in this point the similarity is not particularly close, except that in Warner's tale and in *Menaphon*, the lover (Curan in Warner; Melicer-

³⁷ 1586, Bk. IV., ch. 20. In Chalmer's *English Poets*, 1810, Vol. IV., pp. 498-658. See J. Q. Adams, *Greene's "Menaphon" and "The Thracian Wonder,"* Mod. Phil. III., pp. 317-8; also Wolff's *Greek Romances*, p. 442.

tus in Greene) confesses to a former love affair and describes his former mistress (who is of course identical with the new). From Sidney's *Arcadia* Greene imitated various elements, particularly the wooing of Sephestia by both father and son. From the Greek Romances he incorporated certain structural and verbal parallels.²⁸

With all these borrowings, and with all the inconsistencies of plot and character, the story of *Menaphon* is still Greene's. For there is something more to it than plot and character and borrowings. In structure it is far from being the best of Greene's works. Its companion-piece, *Pandosto*, surpasses it in this regard. But I believe that when most of the few present-day readers of Greene's romances agree in pronouncing it his most charming novel they are right in their judgment. It is as near the essence of the *dulci* as Greene ever got.

Menaphon is not equal to Lodge's *Rosalynde*; and it had not, moreover, the good fortune to be turned into a Shakespearean play. But it is, nevertheless, a *sweet* story. There is about it an atmosphere quite its own, — the idyllic pastoral setting, and the songs, the country loves, the dances, the tending of flocks, the piping in the shade of the hawthorn. There is the sunshine of the anywhere-nowhere *Arcadia*, the idealization of existence, the freedom of movement that comes from life not lived within the bounds of the troubled world.

"Whiles thus *Arcadia* rested in a silent quiet, *Menaphon* the Kings Shepheard, a man of high account among the swaines of *Arcadia*, loued of the Nymphes, as the paragon of all their countrey youngsters, walking solitarie downe to the shore, to see if anie of his ewes and lambes were straggled downe to the strond to brouse on sea iuie, wherfore they take

²⁸ See Wolff, *Greek Romances*, for a discussion of these parallels of structure and phrase.

speciall delight to feede; he found his flockes grazing upon the Promontorie Mountaines hardlie: wheron resting himselfe on a hill that ouer-peered the great *Mediterraneum*, noting how *Phoebus* fetched his *Lauallots* on the purple Plaines of *Neptunus*, as if he had meant to haue courted *Thetis* in the royaltie of his roabes. . . . *Menaphon* looking ouer the champion of *Arcadie* to see if the Continent were as full of smiles, as the seas were of fauours, sawe the shrubbes as in a dreame with delightfull harmonie, and the birdes that chaunted on their braunches not disturbed with the least breath of a fauourable *Zephirus*. Seeing thus the accord of the Land and Sea, casting a fresh gaze on the water Nymphs, he began to consider how *Venus* was feigned by the poets to spring of the froathe of the Seas; which draue him straight into a deepe coniecture of the inconstancie of Loue:

Some say Loue
Foolish Loue
Doth rule and gouerne all the Gods,
I say Loue,
Inconstant Loue,
Sets mens senses farre at ods."

There are cares in this land of Arcadia, hearts sore with unrequited love. And there are wars and rumors of wars, languishing in prisons, shipwreck, separation of kindred. But all these will pass away, we know; the lost will be found, hard hearts will melt, and happiness will come to her own. The story is romantic and unreal; it could never have happened. But that doesn't make any difference. There is a charm to it for one who can disentangle himself for a moment from the crowding business of the day to go back to the golden times, — even don a Watteau coat and hat to sport with jolly shepherds, make love to the beautiful shepherdesses, and, more than all, enjoy

"The sweet content that country life affords."

Philomela need not be summarized in full. The romance is the story of a jealous husband who falsely accuses his wife of inconstancy, and has her banished. She goes to a distant land and lives humbly. Then the slaves who have borne false witness confess their wrong-doing. The jealous husband is himself banished. He sets out to find his wife, and comes at length to the place in which she lives. Tired of his vain search, he assumes the responsibility for the murder of the Duke's son, who is thought to have been killed. The wife hears of the self-accusation, and to save her husband declares herself to be the murderer. Then the Duke's son appears and the man and his wife are happy in their reunion — so happy that the man dies of joy.³⁹

There is one romance left, *Cicero's Amor*, or *Tullies Love*. Next to *Pandosto*, this was Greene's most popular novel. It is a story of love, with pastoral elements intermingled (rather, we should say, dragged in). Greene speaks of it as his attempt "to counterfeit Tullies phrase," and as his "indeauor to pen doune the loves of Cicero, which Plutarch, and Cornelius Nepos, forgot in their writings."

In all these romances, it is ever necessary to bear in mind Greene's attitude toward Fortune. His inability to ground a plot in motives which have their sources within the springs of personality made him perceive the value, and the necessity, of Fortune as a narrative element. Greene's attitude never developed into a cult. Fortune, mysterious and incalculable, was to some people rather more real then than now. She was a personality whose whims determined much of the lot of man. She was one of the forces of the universe, sharing with man himself the responsibility for the management of the world. Such a view, I say, Greene did not acquire. He had not enough imagination to acquire

³⁹ Greene's novel furnished one of the plots in Davenport's *City Nightcap*. 1624.

it. A conception like that would have necessitated the ability to grasp character which was the very thing that Greene lacked. But although he did not rise high in his conception of Fortune, he was able to get from her that which he needed for the success of his narrative. What he wanted was something which would help him get his characters about, move them from one situation into another, without having to justify those activities. Fortune could do that. One turn of her wheel would be enough to change the face of things completely. We should have a new and interesting complication, and no explanation would be necessary as to how it came about. Fortune became, therefore, a word ever on Greene's lips. It represented an idea to be played with, talked about, bandied here and there, given all manner of attributes; most important of all, Fortune became an actual motive power in a line of action.⁴⁰ But wherever used, she was primarily a narrative element, a servant to Greene's story-telling instinct.

In this capacity Fortune is the source at once of Greene's strength and of his weakness: of strength, in that his use of Fortune enables him to present interesting and (forgetting for the moment the long speeches — which are for the most part the fault of the age, not of Greene) rapid narrative; of weakness, in that Fortune relieved him of what would by nature have been to him a difficult task, the creation of genuine characters.

Recognizing the place which Fortune holds, we can understand the work that Greene has constructed on that basis. His incompetence to seize hold upon the fundamental nature of a character and to define the principles upon which

⁴⁰ Dr. Wolff (*Greek Romances*, p. 392) summarizes Greene's conception of Fortune as having three phases: that in which she is purely an abstraction, that in which she is a quasi-personality, that in which she is a mistress of plot.

that character acts, his leaving the conduct of affairs pretty much in Fortune's hands results, as we should well expect, in many inconsistencies of plot and character. Consistency is no virtue if there is no relation between what a man is and what a man does. We are not aware of defects unless we have an ideal of perfection. So far as consistency was concerned, Greene had no such ideal.

The result of this disregard for making a story plausible is easily made apparent. The situation in *Menaphon*, for example, of father, husband, and son, all in love with Samela is in itself ridiculous. The total ignoring of the elapsed twenty years is unpardonable if we stop to think of it. When we stop to think of it, too, *Arbasto* is nothing but the tale of a whining old man. And we become almost impatient with Greene that he should permit the quondam king the outrageous privilege of heaping the blame for his misfortune anywhere but on his own wilful head. The point about the whole matter, however, is that we do not stop to think. Realizing that *Pandosto* or *Menaphon* or whatever romance it is we take up, is so largely the result merely of what "happened," we move along with the action, never pausing to analyze or to question. Inconsistencies do not seem to have bothered Greene; and so long as he makes no attempt to smooth them over we are hardly aware that they exist.

Now that the account of the various kinds of Greene's fiction is completed, it remains to speak of some general topics which pertain to his fiction as a whole. In this connection there are qualities of style which we may take up first.

When we speak of Greene's style, both as to its own characteristics and as to the influences which produced it, we naturally think first of John Lyly and his *Euphues*. Rightly so, for Lyly's novel was predominant when Greene's first one was published, and continued to be so for a number of years. As a matter of fact, however, Lyly's manner of

writing was not originated by him, nor was it peculiar to him. Various scholars, notably Mr. Bond, have set forth Lyly's relations with his predecessors, and have shown that there were at hand practically all the elements which Lyly employed. Greene, therefore, in following Lyly was in reality carrying on the tradition of the English novel as established by Gascoigne and as used by Pettie, Whetstone, Riche, and the rest of the earlier writers of fiction.

Greene was not far from the beginning of this line of development. But even by this time, although fiction was still tentative in its forms (it is always tentative, so far as that is concerned), it had taken on certain fixed modes of expression. The conventionality of Elizabethan poetry both in form and in content has long been recognized. Elizabethan fiction underwent the same sort of process, so that not only form, but thought as well, and the manner of expressing it, became to a large degree stereotyped and impersonal. So advanced a state of conventionality was fortunate from Greene's point of view. It made unnecessary any large amount of originality with regard to the treatment of any particular situation. The method of handling a courtship, for example, was to be found ready at hand. But the result of the taking over by Greene of these elements of novel construction was, from the manner in which he used these elements, that of carrying the process still further. That is, Greene seldom rises above the convention itself to make of it a genuine means of character portrayal or an integral part in the motivation of a plot. We have, therefore, in his novels an almost endless succession of similar situations treated in a similar fashion, a great many of which might be transferred from one novel to another, with no harm done, — or benefit either.

It was to Greene's detriment that he did to so great an extent become a follower of convention. He was impeded

rather than helped by his conformity to fashion. The quality of his work, which, we have before had occasion to state, is his characteristic and most complete attainment, is the straightforwardness and swiftness of his narrative. If he had left himself free to the guidance of his own natural talent, his results would have in them more of permanent value. Had he broken away from tradition more fully and worked in the vein represented by the tale of Tompkins the Wheelwright or by some of his short stories in the conny-catching pamphlets,⁴¹ he would, however much he was catering to the taste of his time in conforming to fashion, have done a more effectual service in the development of a simple narrative style.

It is apparent that Greene did not himself understand wherein his ability lay. He has cluttered his stories up with all sorts of decorative tinsel: letters, "passions," speeches for every kind of situation, formal discourses, misogynist tirades, declarations of love and their answers, digressions and asides to the reader, proverbial philosophy, quotations from all the tongues, stock illustrations, classical and natural history allusions, — commonplaces in Elizabethan fiction too familiar to need illustration. Indeed it requires on the part of the modern reader as full a recognition as he is able to give of the fact that after all Greene is not wholly responsible for the presence of these features in his work to prevent a failure to perceive its real merit, and a condemnation of it wholesale to the literary bone-yard. But the worst is, granting that such things were fashionable and so to be indulged in, that Greene seems to have delighted in this elegance of phrase and encumbering ornament.

Greene seems not to have understood that he was thus ever striving, as it were, to get away from what his nature would have him do. At the same time he did make progress

⁴¹ See Chapter IV.

in his style. *Pandosto* is more direct than the *Carde of Fancie*. Throughout Greene's career there is perceptible a slow but steady turning away from the ornate and artificial to the more natural kind of fiction. This turning is due partly, of course, to the turning of the age in that direction. But it is also due to Greene's own development, a development of which he was to some extent conscious. In *Menaphon* there is a passage⁴² which shows that "literary style" was to Greene something which could be put on and taken off at will. This consciousness is further evidenced by the admirable simplicity of the social pamphlets, and by the abrupt change in the tone of the last few pages of the *Groatsworth of Wit*.

Greene possessed, when he forgot himself and was really concerned with what he said rather than with how he said it, a straightforwardness wholly unexpected in a writer living before Bacon. This directness is especially noticeable, as I said, in the social pamphlets. But it is discernible in the fiction, too. Illustrations can be found near the end of many of the novels. Like most of his predecessors, Greene was more interested in getting a story under way than he was in its conclusion. Perhaps it would be more nearly correct to say that he expended more energy of elaboration upon the first half than upon the latter. The result of such a process is that the opening of a story is often stilted in its method. Too much emphasis is placed upon speech, talking back and forth and writing letters; the movement

⁴² "Samela made this replie, because she heard him so superfine as if Ephoebus had learned him to refine his mother tongue, wherefore thought he had done it of an inkhorne desire to be eloquent; and Melicertus thinking that Samela had learned with Lucilla in Athens to anatomize wit, and speake none but Similes, imagined she smoothed her talke to be thought like Sapho, Phaos Paramour.

Thus deceived either in others suppositions, Samela followed her sute thus." Vol. IV., p. 82.

is slow and tedious, exasperating at times. Then suddenly, as if all at once realizing that he has enough written to make a salable pamphlet, Greene takes himself in hand, dispenses with his artificiality, winds up his action, dismisses his characters and lo! the story is done. There is a certain precipitousness about such a performance, one must admit. You don't always keep up with it, and you don't always understand just what has happened. Perhaps the haste is just as bad technique as the slowness. My point here is that Greene can be direct; that he has, underneath the assumed literary form of expression, another more simple form.

Throughout the whole of my discussion of Greene's novels I have repeatedly dwelt upon what seems to me to be Greene's real ability, that of narration with an aim at artistic narrative effect. I have, too, told what seems to me to be his defects in characterization, his inability to infuse life into his men and women. In view of what has been observed above in regard to Greene's over-emphasis upon the first half of a story, this element of characterization deserves just a word more.

Greene constantly threw stones in the way of his own narrations. There is no doubt that he did so deliberately, — subservient to custom, and pleased with his results. I think there is another reason, though, which helps to account for these obstructions. Inheritances they were, — "passions," speeches, letters, and so on, — coming from various literary sources. There was no other phase of Elizabethan fiction which became more stereotyped in its form of expression. But these elements, found most excessively in the first part of the story, are indicative of something else than just convention. They manifest an interest in characterization.

The "passions," for example, which are scattered broadcast throughout Elizabethan novels are attempts at char-

acter analysis. They aim to set forth the mental states in which people find themselves under definite conditions. The psychology upon which they are based is generally unsound and artificial. The emotions that these people undergo, the thoughts that they utter, are not true to life. But the faults do not alter the necessity of our understanding the aim of this psychologizing. With all its imperfection it shows an inclination toward character study. There was, clearly, on the part of the Elizabethan novelists a growing interest not only in the art of telling a story effective for the events in it, but also in making the people whom those events concern appear as genuinely human as possible. Greene was a participant in this movement toward fuller characterization. The fact that he did not succeed must not lessen our recognition of the fact that he tried.

Looked at from this point of view, there is perhaps a little more sympathy to be felt with the feeble efforts which Greene and the rest of them made. These men were conforming to fashion, they were over-elaborate and affected; but they were at the same time using the only methods they knew of presenting character. They had not yet learned the art of letting characters reveal their own personalities in natural conversation, nor had they learned that we may come to know people not only by what they do and say but also by their reactions toward other people, and by the reactions of other people toward them.

With the various people whom Greene endeavored to present we need not deal at length. It may be well to take up two of them in order to bring out the two prominent facts about Greene's characterization.

Of all of Greene's characters Sephestia is probably the best known. She is the victim of distressing and cruel circumstances, but she embodies all the qualities of an

ideal heroine. She is beautiful, kind, faithful, resourceful, patient, charming. When she sings her lullaby to her sleeping babe, when she mourns her fate, when she moves among the scenes of pastoral life, or when in prison she spurns the love of a king, — always she has our interest and our sympathy. Our feeling for her is not, however, that which comes from depth or clearness in her portrayal. It is derived rather from a certain refinement of atmosphere which surrounds her, from the delicacy of the lines with which she is depicted. I introduce Sephestia here because this refinement and delicacy which I mention in connection with her compose one of Greene's salient characteristics, one of the things we often think of in relation to him. [Indeed, the significant fact about Greene's women lies not so much in an added depth of portraiture over what his predecessors had accomplished, as in giving to them a new interest by a process of idealization. Greene's women are not, that is, so much more genuinely human, nor do they necessarily act from so much more definitely conceived motives than those of his predecessors. But they do possess the charm which arises from a delicacy of presentation and from a refinement of attitude toward them as heroines.

The other character I wish to speak of is Arbasto, who illustrates in an extraordinary degree another phase of Greene's characters. Arbasto is an old man who lives in a cell and mourns. The experience of life has been unhappy for him, for he has been banished from his kingdom. Fortune is to blame. The association of Fortune with the affairs of men which Arbasto makes, and which Greene lets pass unchallenged, leads to an understanding of what the trouble is. Greene got many ideas from the Italian Renaissance, plots and motives, and types of characters. But there was one conception which he did not get hold of

in a way to make it effective. That was the con- of the force of personality. I spoke of this failure connection with the discussion of Valdracko, but it apparent in all of Greene's works. [Greene's interest in characterization was not enough to counterbalance the lack of a sweeping imagination such as Marlowe had, and such as is necessary to transform puppets into living heroes. And so, whether the ruling passion be revenge, jealousy, ambition, what not, there is always a littleness about Greene's portrayal, a dissatisfaction with the result obtained. No one of these characters has strength to dominate the situation in which he is placed. Fortune, not personality, is the moving power.

— One is inclined to come away from a close study of Greene's novels with too grave an impression of him. We may inquire what he was like as an author, what his methods were, what influences affected him. But we must remember that Greene wrote rapidly, that he was primarily a journalist. He copied, adapted, created. He may have been conscious in his art. There is no way of knowing, for consciousness of effort and utilitarianism of purpose are not mutually exclusive ideals. We must be careful, however, not to regard as necessarily deliberate art what may be only shrewdness. I am convinced that there is no more fundamental element in a true conception of Greene than a realization of the fact that he is best appreciated when studied with an attitude that does not take him too seriously. We must not, in other words, overlook the journalist in our study of the artist.

CHAPTER III

SERO SED SERIO

FOR Greene, the useful continued to mingle with the sweet up until 1590. England's conflict with "Anti-Christ" and her triumph over the Spanish Armada had, to be sure, swerved him aside to discover his conscience in religion, as he put it, in the *Spanish Masquerado* (lic. Feb. 1, 1589), a thoroughly dull "devise" wherein "is discovered effectuallie, in certaine breefe Sentences and Mottos, the pride and insolencie of the Spanish estate . . . whereunto by the Author, for the better understanding of his device, is added a breefe glosse," the which written, we are informed, "least I might be thought to tie myselfe wholly to amorous conceites."¹ The work is as uninspired as can be, — Greene had probably picked up an anti-Catholic tract somewhere and had translated it (as he did the *Royal Exchange* the next year) when the occasion was so ripe that any pamphlet with "Spanish" on its title-page would find a ready market. There is nothing of real religion about it. The work had not been prompted by any such motive as repentance for the triviality of earlier writings; so Greene went on with *Menaphon* and *Ciceronis Amor* in the way he had been going. But *Orpharion*, licensed January 9, 1590, marks the end of this division of Greene's work.² Henceforth — for a year — his attitude is represented by the *Sero sed serio* of this chapter.

¹ Vol. V., p. 242.

² *Philomela* and *Farewell to Follie* were published after this date; but see Chap. VI.

Greene has told us how the new motto came to be adopted.* "After I was burdened with the penning of the *Cobler of Canterbury*, I waxed passing melancholy, as grieving that either I should be wrong with envy, or wronged with suspicion . . . so in a discontented humour I sat me down upon my bed-side, and began to cal to remembrance what fond and wanton lines had past my pen, and how I had bent my course to a wrong shore." These thoughts troubled him greatly and he prayed to God to be shadowed with the wings of His grace, to be kept an undefiled member of His church, and to show himself regenerate and a reformed man from all his former follies. Being in this meditation, he fell asleep.

Then a vision came to him which he describes. Chaucer and Gower held conversation with each other and with him, the former encouraging him in his literary art and the latter condemning him. He inclined to Gower's ideas and promised to write no more wanton pamphlets. Then Solomon appeared and discoursed of Wisdom and Religion. "Be a Devine, my Sonne," he said. Greene awoke and "a sodaine feare tainted every limme and I felt a horror in my conscience, for the follyes of my Penne: whereupon, . . . I resolved peremptorilie to leave all thoughts of love, . . . howsoever the direction of my studies shall be limited me, as you had the blossomes of my wanton fancies, so shall you have the fruits of my better labours."

Thus did Greene set the machinery going which was to carry out his next venture, the series of novels on the story of the prodigal son.

That which was destined to become the most influential factor in spreading the theme and form of the prodigal story was the *Acolastus* of Gnaepheus, a Latin play which was published at Antwerp in 1529. The reason for the popu-

* Vol. XII.

larity of this work was that of its double appeal. In the first place, it suited the reaction of the Reformation period against the non-Christian literature of the classical writers; and in the second place, it took easily the form of the Terentian Comedy. This double capacity for supplying the need for Christian teaching and for being substituted as a textbook in the schools was the source of its power. The *Acolastus* was widely read and widely translated.⁴ It supplanted classical comedies as a text in the schools, and equally important it gave rise to another type of drama represented by the *Studentes of Stymmelius*.⁵ But it was not upon the drama alone that the prodigal story exerted its influence. It came to have considerable importance in Elizabethan fiction.

Mr. John Dover Wilson,⁶ whose article first directed my attention to the occurrence of the prodigal-son story in Greene's writing, has studied *Euphues* in the light of the *Acolastus* and the *Studentes*,⁷ and on the basis of that study has reached the conclusion that in reality Lyly's novel is an example of the prodigal-son story. It was he who suggested that the so-called repentant pamphlets of Greene also belonged to this class. This latter suggestion I have followed out. In the following pages I shall endeavor to set forth the extent of Greene's use of the theme. Before I discuss the influence of the prodigal-son

⁴ See *The School Drama*, including Palgrave's Introduction to *Acolastus*, in Teachers College Publications, Columbia University. By James L. McConaughy. See also Herford, *The Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century*, Chap. III.

⁵ Of this student drama, the *Glasse of Government* of Gascoigne is the notable example in England.

⁶ *Euphues and the Prodigal Son*. The Library, October, 1909, p. 337.

⁷ Of course *Acolastus* is only one of the numerous prodigal-son plays. Cf. also *Asotus* and various English imitations and adaptations. A discussion of these may be found in Herford's *Literary Relations*.

story at length, however, it may be well to examine the *Acolastus* itself.

The play has five acts, but the story really falls into four parts. At the opening of the play Pelargus, the king, is much troubled by the determination of Acolastus, his son, to set out to see the world. Eubulus, symbolizing foresight, advises him to allow the young man to go. Finally matters are arranged. Acolastus is given his share of the inheritance, an abundance of good advice, and a Bible. The Bible is soon discarded at the suggestion of Philautus, the friend of Acolastus who aroused, in the first place, his desire to travel and his haughtiness toward his elders. The father's advice is not followed. And as for the "*decem talenta*,"—*dissipavit substantiam suam vivendo luxuriose*. Acolastus travels into a far country, familiar to us and to the sixteenth century as the land of classical comedy. There are parasites in the land, waiting for such as he. When Acolastus comes through the market place, they insinuate themselves into his acquaintance and lead him off. He is in a courtesan's house. *Lais*, the beautiful courtesan, ensnares him. He orders a great feast, and there is merry-making, and wine. The next day Acolastus is cozened of what money he has left, and turned naked and penniless out of doors. *Lais*, with whom he had so fallen in love, is the first to rob him of his clothes. A famine comes upon the land. Acolastus is in great distress. He enters the service of a farmer, who sets him to feeding pigs. After a time, he recalls all his father's precepts, and goes home. There he is received with great rejoicing. Of the five acts two and a half are devoted to the second of these four parts, — to the events that transpire in the prodigal's scenes of riotous living.

With such a summary in mind let us turn to Greene's prodigal-son stories. By far the most distinctive one from the point of view of reflecting this influence is the *Mourning*

Garment. In this novel a rich old man, Rabbi Bilessi, of Callipolis, had two sons.⁸ The elder was Sophonos, handsome and wise, yet something of a coward. He became a merchant with his father. (One wonders what business a rabbi was in!) The younger was Philador, also handsome and of good wit. He loved company; and he felt his father's curb upon his liberty. Philador desired to travel, and asked his father's consent (long speech on the advantages of travel). The father (long speech) tried to dissuade him, but the youth persisted in his request. At last the old man gave his consent and the son's portion of the inheritance. After the father's farewell (long speech), Philador set out. This so far corresponds to the first part of the play, occupying, in the novel, thirteen pages.⁹

Philador visited many lands, always bearing in mind his father's precepts; and came at last to Thessaly. He could see no town, but a shepherd offered to direct him. (Greene digresses to paint a metrical portrait of the shepherd and his wife.) The shepherd led him through a vale. (Greene's pastoralism leads him astray to have the shepherd tell a tale of a shepherd's faithless loving. Possibly a part of the prodigal theme, conveyed indirectly as a lesson.) They arrived at Saragunta, a beautiful city. The shepherd warned him to beware of the Unicorn, at which the three beautiful courtezans lived.¹⁰ Philador disregarded the advice and went to the Unicorn, where he was courteously entertained, and where he fell in love with the youngest of the three sisters. Philador ordered a supper. There was much talk on the subject of love. (Corresponding to the *Lais*

⁸ Gnaepheus leaves out the elder son.

⁹ There will be noticed the absence of the characters to correspond to those of Eubulus and Philautus in the play.

¹⁰ Compare with the old man's advice to Euphues upon his arrival in Naples. Philador, like Euphues, does not follow the advice.

scene of the banquet in *Acolastus*.) The courtezans began to get hold of Philador's money. He dismissed all of his servants but one. One of those dismissed tried to give Philador some advice, but in vain. Philador lived on in his sin. This is the second part of the story, occupying about forty pages (of which fifteen are devoted to the shepherd's tale).

After a while, there came a famine. Many people died, but Philador gave no aid. At last his money gave out, and he was obliged to sell his clothes to pay his debts. The three sisters seized his trunk and took the doublet from his back. (Corresponds to Lais' taking the clothes of Acolastus.) He reviled them and asked the youngest to aid him. She scorned him, and had the servants put him out of the house and beat him. Philador then left the city. He wandered long, — tired, hungry, and thirsty. Finally he went to sleep. When he awoke he began to think of his father's precepts. (Long soliloquy.) A farmer came along. He gave Philador the task of feeding his hogs. Philador ate husks with the swine, in true prodigal fashion. Finally he decided to go home to his father. Here ends the third part of the story, — eighteen pages.

One day on the way home he saw a despairing lover about to kill himself. Philador persuaded him from his rashness; and left him a scroll containing some aphorisms and an Ode. Philador went on. At last, with remorse in his heart, he came in sight of his father's house. He saw his father and went to him. The old man wept. Philador confessed his folly, and asked to be made a hired servant. His father answered, and forgave him, and gave him a new robe (of black). Sophonos would not come in to the banquet which was prepared. The father urged. Sophonos upbraided his father, but finally went in to the feast. The shepherds came. (Why should shepherds be coming to a rabbi merchant's

house?) One of them sang a song, and all were merry. So ends the fourth and last part, twenty-seven pages.

Without comment, it can be seen clearly how Greene is making use of the prodigal story as it comes down from the prodigal plays such as that of Gnaepheus. The proportions of his novel are not quite those of the play, but the main incidents are the same.

The *Mourning Garment* is the only novel which follows the prodigal story throughout its length in all details. But other novels of Greene follow it in certain parts, and certainly are to be classed as belonging to the prodigal-son literature of the time. One of Greene's variations is that to be found in *Never too Late* and its sequel *Francescos Fortunes*, the two novels together making a form of the prodigal story. The story opens with a frame-work not unlike that of *Arbasto*, except that the man who does the talking tells, not his own story as *Arbasto* does,¹¹ but that of one Francesco. The palmer's story does not begin in accordance with the prodigal-son story at all. Indeed the whole first part of the prodigal story is omitted. There is substituted instead the love story of Francesco and Isabel, which is quite in the manner of the Italian novelle, and which has certain elements in the last part decidedly reminiscent of Greek Romance. The conclusion of it all is that Francesco and Isabel were married and lived happily.¹²

After Francesco and Isabel had been married for seven years, business took Francesco to Troynovant. He intended to stay nine weeks, and so, having sold his horse and rented

¹¹ Unless Francesco and the palmer are one.

¹² Francesco for a time kept a school. Euphuus was a scholar. In Riche's tale, "Of two Brethren and their Wives" (Shak. Soc. Vol. XVI., p. 127), an old man had two sons. The elder held the lands, the younger was trained up in learning. Roberto, in Greene's *Groatsworth of Wit*, was a student. These may all be remnants from the prodigal-student drama.

a room, he worked hard in order to get back to Isabel as soon as possible. This, in a regular prodigal-son story, would be the end of the first part; but, as we see, there is nothing of the prodigal story about it.

From here on the prodigal story is carried out more or less closely. Having settled down in Troynovant, Francesco one day sees a gentlewoman at a window (Digression on Courtezans). This courtezan desires to entrap him. She succeeds in doing so. When Francesco gets back to his room he thinks of Isabel. He meditates, but decides to enjoy the company of Infida while he is in Troynovant. So many days pass. Once he thinks of Isabel, but the virtuous impression is soon gone. Meantime Isabel is wondering why Francesco does not return to her. She hears rumors of the affair with Infida, but she construes everything for the best. She writes a letter telling of her longing for him. She speaks of their child, and hopes it is business and not anger that keeps him away. Upon receipt of his wife's letter, Francesco decides to go home. But when he sees Infida, he changes his mind, scoffs at the letter, and lives on in sin. Thus three years pass.

So much for the second part of the story. This part corresponds very well to that of the prodigal's sojourn in a far land. There is no doubt that Greene got this part of his story from another prodigal-son story of the period. The whole situation, as M. Jusserand pointed out,¹² came from Warner's story of *Opheltes*. Opheltes married to Alcippe (Francesco married to Isabel) goes to Sardis (Francesco goes to Troynovant) where he is entrapped by Phoemonoe, a courtezan (Francesco is entrapped by Infida). Alcippe goes to the courtezan's house where she becomes a servant. Opheltes is ruined and turned out of doors. Then when Alcippe reveals her identity, the couple are happy. Isabel merely sent a

¹² *English Novel in the Time of Shakespeare*, p. 150.

letter to Francesco. Greene, as we shall presently see, had other adventures in store for her than to enter the courtesan's service.

Now begins the third part of the story, that of the prodigal's degeneration. At last, after three years of riotous living, Francesco's money is gone. He asks Infida for a loan. She refuses and casts him off. Francesco is very disconsolate (long speech), and bitter against courtezans. He makes up his mind to go home, and then lies down to sleep. When he awakes (we are now in *Francescos Fortunes*, the *Second Part of Never too Late*), he begins to revile women. He has no money. His hostess (not the courtesan this time) sells his clothes. He is too proud to work. At last he falls in with — not a farmer who gives him a job feeding swine, but a company of players, for whom he begins to write plays. In this capacity he becomes prosperous. Infida, hearing of his prosperity, tries to recapture him. But Francesco had learned his lesson.

In the meantime, Isabel had experiences at home. She became noted for her virtues. One Signor Bernardo fell in love with her, and laid plans to win her. The story is that of the modest Susanna made to fit the circumstances.¹⁴ Greene early in his career had written the *Mirroure of Modestie*, a version of the Apocryphal story of Susanna and the elders. The theme seems to have appealed to him again, for it is the same story that he uses for Isabel's experiences. In many passages, especially in the latter half, the two stories are identical, even to the minutest phraseology.

News of this event comes to the ears of Francesco in Troynovant as he sits in a tavern. His conscience hurts him, and he goes to his chamber. He sees his folly, and

¹⁴ See Herford, *Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century*, (Chap. III.) for an account of the influence of the modest Susanna theme in the Drama.

writes a poem about it. He prepares to go home. One of his friends gives him twelve precepts.

Thus ends the third part, with the curious combination of the prodigal's repentance and — departing from the tradition — its included account of what happened to his wife at home.¹⁵

After five days Francesco arrives at home. There is no aged father to fall upon his neck and weep, but there is his faithful wife. Francesco is overcome with remorse (long speech). He repents and weeps bitterly. Isabel forgives him. They have supper. After supper the host offers to tell them a tale. He does so (a light tale) in no less than fifty pages!

So ends the fourth part, after which Francesco and Isabel spend the rest of their lives in quiet.

Having finished the prodigal story, Greene returns to his frame-work — about which we have forgotten by this time — and has the palmer tell his reasons for traveling about the country. He says that he has been in all the cities of Europe, and is on his way to Venice. It is his business to draw men from Venus. He writes some verses upon the wall and then departs. What he did, and how he lived, Greene will, if he hears, let us know.

There is one prodigal-son story left, the *Groatworth of Wit*. There once lived a wealthy old man who had two sons. The old man esteemed the elder as the heir apparent, but neglected the other, who like Francesco was a scholar and married to a gentlewoman. At last the old Gorinius became very ill. He called his sons in to him and bade them farewell. All his goods he left to Lucanio, the elder. To the younger, Roberto, he left an old goat wherewith to buy wit,

¹⁵ The Susanna story is substituted for the coming of Alcippe to the courtesan's house. Of course both Warner's and Greene's stories emphasize the wife's virtue and the husband's prodigality.

the reason for this unequal allotment being that one day at table Roberto had censured his father and some guests for being usurers.¹⁶ Then after some further advice to Lucanio, Gorinius died. The scene of which I have just given a synopsis corresponds to the first part of the prodigal story.¹⁷

The second part of the story proceeds as follows. Roberto was greatly angered by his father's bequest and decided to get revenge. He went to Lucanio. He flattered him and told him he ought to marry. He said he would help him to find a wife. Then Roberto took Lucanio to the house of Lamilia, a courtesan. Lucanio was ensnared. There was music, dancing, supper, and talk. Roberto encouraged Lucanio, so that Lamilia's power was complete. Presently Lamilia, Roberto, and Lucanio began to play at dice. Lamilia was winning. Lucanio went to his rooms for more money. While he was gone Roberto asked for his share of the winnings. Lamilia refused and reviled him for betraying his brother. When Lucanio came back Lamilia told him how Roberto had set about to betray him. Lucanio became very angry, and Roberto was turned out of doors.

Roberto was in trouble. He had no money. He fell in with a man (as in *Francescos Fortunes*) who proposed that he write plays. Roberto went with the player. Lamilia continued to hold Lucanio in her power. By the end of two years, she had possessed herself of all of Lucanio's money,

¹⁶ Cassander, in Callimachus' tale (*Euphues and his England*, Vol. II. Ed. Bond, p. 14) was also a usurer.

¹⁷ Instead of the scene of a young man's struggle to gain his father's consent to travel and of the young man's departure, scenes similar to that in *Groatsworth of Wit* came to be substituted. In *Euphues and his England* (Ed. Bond, Vol. II., p. 14) the tale of Callimachus opens in the same way. The father dies after giving much advice, and leaves the son disappointed in his inheritance. In the prodigal-son story of Cassander in the same work (p. 23) the youth starts out to travel after he has received his inheritance from the hand of a dying father.

and she dismissed him. Soon Lucanio became a pander, and continued so until his death.

In the meantime Roberto had become famous as a playwright. He kept low company, and did not pay his debts. He knew all the low people and "learned the legerdemaines of nips, foysters, conni-catchers, crosbiters, lifts, high Lawyers, and all the rabble of that uncleane generation of vipers; and pithily could he point out their whole courses of craft."¹⁸ His wife implored him to return. But he would not. He had a sister of a villain named Ball for his mistress.

Finally God's judgment came, and with it the end of the middle part of the story. This middle is something of a departure from the tradition. The motive of revenge on the part of Roberto is different. Yet it is not altogether unlike the attitude of Callimachus (Lyly, Ed. Bond, Vol. II., p. 17) who upon finding that his inheritance consisted of some words of wisdom sealed up in a chest, fell into "an extreame rage, renting his clothes and tearing his haire," and cursed his father's will. Seeing that curses aided nothing he set out to travel. Callimachus, like Acolastus, was an only son. Roberto, on the other hand, had a brother against whom he could vent his anger. From rage, such as Callimachus displayed, to revenge (when revenge is possible) is, then, not too great a departure from tradition to have been easily made. Having given the younger son the impulse for revenge, the traditional scenes of the enticement by the courtesan, the supper, music, and talk, the winning away of the inheritance then fall to the lot of the elder brother who is thus made a prodigal. The dismissal of Roberto by Lamilia is of course natural. Lamilia had Lucanio in her power. There was no necessity for sharing the profits with Roberto. The meeting with the player is taken over from *Francescos*

¹⁸ Vol. XII., p. 134. References no doubt to Greene's own conny-catching pamphlets.

Fortunes. The imploring of the wife for Roberto's return is also similar to that in *Francescos Fortunes*, but we hear nothing in this case of what has been happening to her. Nor do we know where she is. The idea of having the prodigal married and of having his wife anxious for him, we have seen, was taken from, or at least is similar to, Warner's *Opheltes*.

Now for the last part. Roberto became very poor — no reason is given except that of God's judgment, although one thinks of Rhenish wine and pickled herrings — and he had no money to pay his debts. His friends were all gone. He had nothing left except the groat his father had given him, and he began to think of his father's legacy.

Here Greene breaks off his story of Roberto. The rest of it is written in his own person. The discussion of this portion of the work is not proper at this time. It belongs later in the chapter with the repentances.

In addition to this group of prodigal-son stories there is one other novel which manifests the influence of the story. This is the *Carde of Fancie*, which is interesting not only for the unique way in which the story is used but also as showing how early (1584) Greene felt the influence of the story. The *Carde of Fancie* is three-fourths romance.¹⁹ A young man, a stranger at the court, falls in love with, and is loved by, the Duke's daughter. War breaks out with a neighboring Duke (the young man's father). A rival for the hand of the daughter denounces the young man as a spy. Consequent difficulties arise. But in the end everything ends well, and the couple are happily married. This, as I say, is all ro-

¹⁹ The situation in the *Carde of Fancie* is similar to that in Riche's *Sappho Duke of Mantua* (*Farewell to Militarie Profession*, 1581). An unknown youth risen to great honor at the court of a Duke falls in love with, and is loved by, the Duke's daughter. The Duke is very angry, but is reconciled upon hearing that the youth is of noble birth.

There is a double wedding at the end of both stories.

mance. But the first part of the story is that of a prodigal son. This same young man had been unruly in his father's court. Finally he had decided to travel. Having won his father's consent, and having been carefully advised in his father's farewell speech, he had set out. He had spent some months in riotous living, had become penniless, had remembered his father's precepts, had left the scene of his rioting, and had gone — not home to his father, but to the court of Alexandria, where the romantic adventures already spoken of took place.

Mamillia is the only other novel (aside from *Pandosto*, in which a father gives his son some worldly advice) which manifests the prodigal-son influence. In *Mamillia* we have the speech on worldly wisdom repeated three times. Florion writes to Mamillia upon her departure from court. Gonzaga upon his death-bed makes a long speech to his daughter. And a most curious form is that of Pharicles, who, as he is nearing Saragossa, names over to himself his reasons for wearing his pilgrim's garb. It is because in Saragossa he will find flatterers, courtezans, parasites; he will have difficulty in choosing real friends; and so on through the catalogue.

In a discussion of these prodigal-son stories, the question of their autobiographical interpretation naturally comes up. They have been termed the "repentant" pamphlets, and upon them no small amount of our conception of Greene has been based. Indeed they have so far entered into our attitude that we can scarcely think of Greene except in terms of them, — of them, that is, and of the *Repentance*. It seems to me that we have, for the most part, gone too far in our acceptance of the prodigal stories as autobiographical; that we have been inclined to read into them too much of autobiographical detail from our preconceived notions of Greene as a repentant sinner.

In fact I think that the whole idea of repentance in connection with Greene has been a little over-emphasized. The theme of repentance was a common one in the prose and poetry of the time. It was used over and over again, especially by the poets, and like many other literary themes of the day became to a certain extent conventionalized.²⁰ I am not saying that sinning and repenting were not genuine experiences to Greene; perhaps more to him than to some others. But to speak of repentance as a "characteristic note" belonging essentially to him is to neglect one of the popular Elizabethan themes.

There is one other consideration which has no doubt aided in this over-emphasis. The *Mourning Garment* has for some years been recognized as being merely a version of the biblical story in conformance with the Renaissance tradition, of *Acolastus* and the rest of the prodigal plays. But the group as a whole has not been so recognized, — a tribute to Greene as an imaginative writer that it has not, — and so we have centered our attention upon the repentance element of the stories rather than upon the fact that they belong to a specific type of fiction, and upon the more fundamental fact that repentance is an inherent and inevitable element in that kind of writing.

If we examine closely, we shall find that the only radical departure in these prodigal stories of Greene to which no parallel exists elsewhere in contemporary fiction is that of the substitution of the writing of plays for the feeding of swine as the prodigal's lot while he is in the far country. This element may be, probably is, autobiographical; at least it may have been suggested by Greene's experience. But that it is not possible on this one detail to base the conclusion that the novels in which it is found are also autobiographical

²⁰ See p. 139 where I have dealt with the subject of repentant poetry in connection with the repentant poetry of Greene.

is at once obvious. The particular element, if Greene meant it to be such, is merely a biographical detail in the midst of a version of the prodigal-son story.

The question is not, then, that of endeavoring to discover what details in certain of Greene's works represent actual details in his own life history; it is rather that of determining to what extent the general tone of the so-called repentance pamphlets is applicable to their author. In this connection, we must remember to ask whether, dissociated from Greene's name, they would suggest anything else than stories on the familiar theme of the prodigal son. As a group, I see in them nothing more. I can only believe that in producing them Greene was writing not autobiography but commercial fiction. Not that the two are necessarily incompatible, but that the point of view is different.

If the mood of the prodigal story happened to fit in with his own nature, — that is another matter. There is no reason for thinking, because he used pastoral elements in certain of his romances, and because he used them artistically and effectively, that the current interest in pastoralism did not correspond to certain definite tendencies in his own make-up. Just so with the prodigal stories. While autobiographical inferences must be derived with caution, there is no need of going to the other extreme and denying any reflection of Greene's own career in his work. Greene was a sentimentalist. It is impossible to believe that when he shut himself up alone with pen, paper, Longus, or Acolastus, he forgot absolutely about himself. At the same time, "repentant pamphlets" were for him primarily fiction.

The conclusion which I have stated, that the prodigal stories are to be regarded as fiction rather than as autobiography, is confirmed, it seems to me, in the statements of Greene himself, and in his attitude toward them. At the end of *Never too Late*, he bids us look for its sequel, *Francescos*

Fortunes, "and after that my *Farewell to Follie*, and then adieu to all amorous Pamphlets."²¹ The *Never too Late* is thus apparently one of the amorous pamphlets. At the beginning of the promised sequel, we are told that if the work had not been promised it would never have been written. But here it is. Henceforth we are to look for Greene's pen in "more deeper matters."²² By the end of the book (p. 229) Greene has evidently forgotten his reluctance, for we find there that if he has further news he will send us tidings in another book. Such a statement seems to invalidate that of the preface. But of course the first statement is meaningless. Lyly had said the same thing, "I hope you will rather pardon for the rudeness in that it is the first, & protect it the more willingly if it offend in that it shalbe the laste,"²³ while he was definitely promising a second part.²⁴

While we are waiting for the *Farewell to Follie*, out comes the *Mourning Garment*, as "the first fruites of my new labours, and the last farewell to my fond desires,"²⁵ which was licensed Nov. 2, 1590. Now if the *Mourning Garment* is the first-fruits of a new life, one wants to know what the *Never too Late* and *Francescos Fortunes* were, — for they were just like it. Yet Greene has deplored these as wanton. The impression we get is that Greene had not made up his mind in regard to this matter. Perhaps the statements are not unlike those we are accustomed to hear in our day of the farewell tours of prima donnas and once famous actresses.

Finally in 1591, as the "ultimum vale" to youthful vanities, appeared the long-heralded *Farewell to Follie*, Greene's "many yeeres (he was then thirty-three) having bitten me

²¹ Vol. VIII., p. 109.

²² Vol. VIII., p. 118.

²³ Lyly. Ed. Bond. Vol. I., p. 180.

²⁴ "You shall in the seconde part heare what newes he bringeth." p. 323.

²⁵ Vol. VIII., p. 22.

with experience, and age growing on bidding mee *Petere graviora*." ²⁶ But even here Greene cannot look upon his past work as wholly bad, — including the three "repentance" pamphlets. His works were "mixed with such morall principles," he consoles himself, "that the precepts of vertue seemed to crave pardon." ²⁷ Of course they could not be so bad as to hinder their sale!

Greene prefixes to the *Farewell to Follie* the repentant motto. It is quite as solemnly pronounced *Sero sed serio* as the rest. But this pamphlet has nothing of repentance in it. It is nothing but a frame-work tale of the *Omne tulit punctum* sort. ²⁸

All of this disbelief that Greene meant anything serious by his professions of repentance — at least that his purpose in talking about repentance was largely mercenary — includes skepticism in regard to the experiences related in the *Vision*. All we know about the religious disturbance which is supposed to have occurred in 1590 is to be found in this one pamphlet. Whether or not Greene had such a disturbance of mind, no one, I suppose, can ever actually know. I am inclined to believe that he had not, and to say with Professor Greg ²⁹ that there is "a strong suspicion that Greene . . . adopted the machinery of repentance by way of explaining and advertising a change of style." The *Cobbler of Canterbury*, which was the cause of all the trouble, was published sometime in 1590; we cannot tell just when. Now Greene's *Orpharion* was licensed January 9. There would hardly have been time before that for Greene to have been burdened with the authorship of the *Cobbler of Canterbury* and to have had the repentance. But the *Orpharion* — written before the *Cobbler* — concludes thus: "Yet could I not hie so fast, but ere I got home I was overtaken with re-

²⁶ Vol. VIII., p. 228.

²⁸ See Chap. II.

²⁷ Vol. VIII., p. 227.

²⁹ Mod. Lang. Rev. Vol. I., p. 241.

penitance.”³⁰ I do not know how to understand this last sentence if it is not an announcement of the forthcoming series of pamphlets, and if it does not mean that Greene was planning the series even before the events supposed to have happened in the *Vision* had occurred.³¹ Especially since *Never too Late*, the first of the series, written before the events described in the *Vision*, bears *Omne tulit punctum* on its title-page. *Francescos Fortunes*, the sequel, is designated as *Sero sed serio*. There is danger, one must admit, of going too far to the other extreme: but in view of the evidence at hand I see nothing sincere about the whole affair.

Misplacing of attention away from the real nature of what Greene was doing and the consequent searching for autobiographical materials have obscured the significance of Greene's work. That significance, I take it, is the fact that Greene was able to treat the prodigal story in an imaginative way.

The three novels which I have grouped together, from their common theme, manifest the same general qualities as are shown in Greene's earlier works. The story was already formed. In itself it was good; and it had, besides, definiteness of treatment from its use in the Latin plays. But it did not suffer in Greene's hands. The ability for telling a story which Greene had already acquired was enough to sustain interest even in so familiar a theme as that of the prodigal son. In characterization these novels are thoroughly in accord with Greene's failure to create living people. The prodigals who set off on the journey are all just alike. Philador, Roberto, Francesco, Gwydonius, — their places might be changed, and no one would be the wiser. Infida and Lamilia are different only in their names.³²

³⁰ Vol. XII., p. 94.

³¹ See Chapter on Chronology of Greene's Non-Dramatic Work.

³² On the subject of the courtezans in these prodigal stories a word is needed. Storojenko and others since his time have alluded to the

Like the romantic pastoral the story of the prodigal son offered no clearly recognized outlines to the novelist. It had been worked out in the drama into more or less definite form as represented by the *Acolastus* and the *Studentes*. But quite as much as other types of fiction this one was yet in the formative stage. There was a general scheme; there were suggestions, incentives; yet there was no fixed tradition as to the method of narrative treatment.

Greene took freely of what he found at hand; he was imitative, rather than original, in that respect. But when all is said and done, he was an early, not a late, borrower. The writing of three or four novels on the prodigal motives, even though there was no great difference between them, was therefore a noteworthy achievement. How imaginative an achievement is well attested by our lack of perception hitherto that Greene was in reality presenting us with a type of fiction, and by our failure not only to discover unity within the group but to understand the type as well.

The three prodigal-son pamphlets, the *Farewell to Follie*, and the *Vision* are, then, intrinsically products of Greene's literary imagination. But the *Repentance* and the concluding pages of the *Groatsworth of Wit* give an impression of greater sincerity. Both of them come from the month of the fatal illness. Both were published after Greene's death, *Groatsworth of Wit* on September 20, and the *Repentance* on October 6.

The last pages of *Groatsworth of Wit* are undoubtedly the

bitterness of Greene's later attitude toward women as compared to the earlier attitude shown in Mariana, Sephestia, and the other heroines of the romances. I had occasion to speak of this alleged change of front in connection with *Alcida* (Chap. II., p. 25); and I repeat what I said there. I see nothing which indicates an added bitterness in Greene's mind. Just as repentance is a part of the material in a prodigal-son story, so is a courtesan an indispensable accessory.

most famous of Greene's writings. They contain, indeed, some lines to be numbered among the most famous lines in the English language:

"Yes trust them not: for there is an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his *Tyggers heart wrapt in a Players hide*, supposes he is as well able to bumbast out a blanke verse as the best of you: and being an absolute *Johannes fac totum*, is in his owne conceit the onely Shak-scene in a countrie."

In addition to the celebrated allusion, the rest of Greene's words are of value.

Roberto, the hero of what has up to this point been a prodigal-son story, has reached the bottom of his despair. He recalls his father's precepts and knows that it is too late to buy the wit he so negligently forgot to buy. His emotions overcome him. "Heere (Gentlmen) breake I off *Robertos* speech; whose life in most parts agreeing with mine, found one selfe punishment as I have done." It would help us to understand the *Groatsworth of Wit* if we could know just when it was written. But we do not know. It seems reasonable, however, to suppose that it was begun before Greene had realized the seriousness of his disease. "Greene though able inough to write, yet deeplier searched with sicknesse than ever heretofore, sends you his Swanne-like song, for he feares that he shall never againe carroll to you woonted love layes [we thought he had given that up two years ago], never discover to you youths pleasures. . . . This is . . . I feare me the last I shall write." He apologizes for the condition of the story as an "Enbrion without shape." Then he proceeds with his tale only thirty-four pages, when he breaks down. His illness has probably become much worse. He is sure that death is upon him. "Though no man be by me to doe me good, yet ere I die, I will by my repentance indevor to doe all men good." His tendency toward sentimentalism grows into morbidness. He condemns him-

self, his past life — which had no doubt been wild enough — and his works without distinction. “Ah Gentlemen, that live to reade my broken and confused lines, looke not I should (as I was woont) delight you with vain fantasies, but gather my follies altogetther, and . . . cast them into the fire. . . . O that the teares of a miserable man . . . might wash their memorie out with me death. . . . But sith they cannot let this my last worke witness against them with me, how I detest them. Blacke is the remembrance of my blacke works, blacker then night, blacker then death, blacker then hell.”

We cannot take such words at their face value, as they pertain either to Greene's works or to his deeds. Gabriel Harvey did indeed give Greene a pretty black reputation:

“I was altogether unacquainted with the man, never once saluted him by name: but who in London hath not heard of his dissolute, and licentious living; his fonde disguisinge of a Master of Arte with ruffianly haire, unseemly apparell, and more unseemelye Company: . . . his apeish counterfeiting of every ridiculous and absurd toy: . . . his monstrous swearinge and horrible forswearinge: . . . his continuall shifting of lodgings: . . . his keping of the foresaid Balls sister, a sorry ragged queane, of whome hee had his base sonne, *Infortunatus Greene*: his forsaking of his owne wife, too honest for such a husband: particulars are infinite. . . . He never envyed me so much, as I pittied him from my heart: especially when his hostiess Isam with teares in her eies, & sighes from a deeper fountaine, (for she loved him derely) tould me of his lamentable begging of a penny pott of Malmsey; and, sir reverence how lowsy he, and the mother of *Infortunatus* were . . . and how he was faine poore soule, to borrow her husbandes shirte, whiles his owne was a washing: and how his dublet, and hose, and sword were sold for three shillings: and beside the charges of his winding sheete, which was foure shillinges: and the charges of hys buriall yesterday, in the New-churtyard neere Bedlam, was six shillinges, and four pence; how deeply hee was indebted to her poore husbände: as appeared by hys own bonde of tenne poundes: which the good woman kindly shewed me.”²²

²² Harvey's Works. Ed. Grosart, Vol. I., pp. 168-71.

But Harvey was an enemy. Perhaps Nashe was more nearly right.

"Debt and deadly sinne, who is not subject to? With any notorious crime I never knew him tainted."

Greene had lived hard. There is unquestionably much truth in the picture that Harvey paints of Greene's last days and of his ignoble death. But so were they all wild. Greene was probably no better, no worse, than the rest. These young University Wits were somewhat beyond the pale of substantial citizenship, anyway.

Whatever his life had been, Greene's dying words are not literally true. They represent him as a man depraved; and Greene was not that. But they reveal clearly the state of mind in which he was, — a sensitive being, friendless and in poverty, sick unto death, with conscience torturing him into anguish through memories of a wasted life. As for his works, Greene need not have been so troubled about them.³⁴

After this self-vituperation Greene writes a letter "to those Gentlemen his Quondam acquaintance, that spend their wits in making plaies," with the address to Marlowe, Nashe,³⁵

"Justice demands the acknowledgment that Greene's imagination is entire and undefiled: in all these tales I cannot recall a single sneaking allusion or prurient image or lascivious detail." S. L. Wolff, *Eng. St.*, Vol. 37, p. 350.

Such statements are common among Greene's critics. Without depreciating the purity of Greene's writings, I think we have been inclined to underestimate that of some other writers of fiction. I fail to see that Greene stands out in striking distinction to Lyly, Lodge, Sidney, or several others that might be mentioned.

* Upon the identification of "young Juvenal" much energy has been expended — "that byting Satyrist, that lastlie with mee together writ a Comedie." For summary of various contentions see McKerrow's edition of Nashe, Vol. V., p. 143. Also Gayley's *Representative English Comedies*, p. 424, seq., where "A Knack to Know a Knave" is offered as a solution for the unknown "Comedie."

and Peele, and the attack on Shakespeare; a fable of the grasshopper and the ant; and finally a letter to his wife, committing to her the charge of their son. All three reiterate the repentance for sin.

"Well, my hand is tired, and I am forst to leave where I would begin; for a whole booke could not containe these wrongs, which I am forst to knit up in some few lines of words."

The *Repentance* was published after the *Groatworth of Wit*. This pamphlet, like the former, "dooth lay open the graceles endeavours of my selfe." It is divided into two parts: the first being the Repentance; the second, the Life and Death. We have the same upbraidings and self-accusations. "I was the mirrour of mischiefe, and the very patterne of all prejudiciall actions." Greene was, too, he says, "a meere Atheist," and a despiser of death. "Tush, what better is he that dies in his bed than he that endes his life at Tyburne, all owe God a death: if I may have my desire while I live, I am satisfied, let me shift after death as I may." And again, "Hell (quoth I) what talke you of hell to me? I know if I once come there, I shall have the company of better men than my selfe, I shal also meete with some madde knaves in that place, & so long as I shall not sit there alone, my care is the lesse." So the young blasphemer goes on.²⁶

All this was to change: the day of judgment came. With it came much grief.

The second part deals very briefly with a few events of Greene's life, his parents "in the Cittie of Norwitch," his

²⁶ "There was no cryme so barbarous, no murther so bloody, no oath so blasphemous, no vice so execrable, but that I could readely recite where I learned it, and by roate repeate the peculiar crime of everye particular Country, Citie, Towne, Village, House, or Chamber." Lyly, *Euphues and His England*. Ed. Bond. Vol. II., p. 24.

early schooling, his dissipation at Cambridge, his travel abroad,³⁷ his going to London, his marriage to "a gentle-

³⁷ There has never been any doubt expressed as to the actuality of this trip, and I do not know that there is necessity for expressing any such doubt here. It is interesting to note, however, that there is in Greene's writings not a single reference (with perhaps one possible exception) which can be cited as indicating that Greene had any direct, first-hand knowledge of the Continent. Even in a case like that in his *Never too Late* (1590) in which an opportunity seems to have been created expressly for descriptions of continental scenes, Greene gives only the vaguest of generalities.

The passage referred to (Vol. VIII., p. 20-32) is rather interesting in this connection. The palmer, "My native home is *England*, the ende of my journey is *Venice*, where I meane to visit an olde friend of mine, an Englishman." Then follows, "Sir (quoth I) if I might with many questions be not offensive, I would faine be inquisitive to knowe, as you have passed along *France*, *Germanie*, the *Rine*, and part of *Italie*, what you have noticed worthie of memorie." To this the palmer answers, "After I had cut from *Dover* to *Calice*, I remembered what olde *Homer* writte of *Ulysses*, that he coveted, not onely to see strange Countries but with a deepe insight to have a view into the manners of men: so I thought as I passed through *Paris*, not onely to please mine eie, with the curious Architecture of the building, but with the diverse disposition of the inhabitantes." The palmer proceeds to speak of the court and the subserviency of the French courtiers, and of the amorousness of the French gentlemen. He then turns to the Germans. But "Nay stay sir (quoth I) before you passe the *Alpes*, give me leave to holde you an houre still in *Lions*." This leads to the palmer's discourse on the French gentlewomen. After this is finished, he speaks briefly of a few characteristics of the Germans. But he did not become interested in the German customs, and so "*sicco pede* past them over, so that I travelled up as farre as *Vienna*, where I saw a thing worthie of memorie": not the description of any definite scene or observation of national customs, as we might expect, but — a hermit in a cell! a hermit who spoke most edifyingly in "rough hie Dutch verses"! From the hermit's cell, says the palmer, he went "to *Vienna*, and from thence coasted up into the borders of *Italy*."

This passage from *Never too Late* is the only instance of its kind in Greene's works. It seems to have been written especially to reveal

mans daughter of good account, with whom I lived for a while: but for as much as she would persuade me from my wilful wickedness, after I had a child by her, I cast her off, having spent up the marriage money which I obtained by her. Then I left her at six or seven, who went into Lincolnshire, and I to London." There is, too, an account of a religious experience (not the one told of in the *Vision*; this one was sometime before 1585 or '86. See Vol. XII., p. 177) which occurred in Norwich, when Greene heard the words of a minister in Saint Andrew's Church.

As to the authenticity of this pamphlet there can be no doubt.³³ The problem involved is quite a different one. It is the problem of interpretation. Can we, or can we not, accept the repentance set forth here (and in the *Groatsworth of Wit*) as sincere? I believe that we can. Greene foisted

an intimate knowledge of the Continent. Instead it contains only indefinite statements, and those the most commonplace or insignificant, such as might easily have been gleaned from books.

Judging from the works alone, one might well doubt the reality of the Italian journey. We must remember, however, that Greene did not in any of his novels make use of the element of background. The absence of specific continental allusions in those stories of which the scenes are laid on the Continent is therefore no more noticeable than the absence of similar allusions in the few stories whose scene is England. In none of his novels did he develop the element of background to the extent that he did, for example, in *Friar Bacon*.

The *Repentance* speaks of Greene's having been in Italy and Spain (p. 172). The *Notable Discovery* has this passage: "I have smyled with the Italian . . . I have eaten Spanishe mirabolanes Fraunce, Germanie, Poland, Denmarke, I knowe them all, yet not affected to any in the fourme of my life." Vol. X., p. 6. This passage resembles one in *Euphues and his England*. Ed. Bond. Vol. II., p. 24. "If I met with one of Creeke, I was ready to lye with him. . . . If with a Grecian, I could dissemble. . . . I could court it with the Italian, carous it with the Dutch-man," etc., to Egypt and Turkey.

³³ See Collins' edition of Greene. Vol. I., Introduction, pp. 50-53.

upon us a series of prodigal stories under pretext of "reformed passions." In spite of that, I think the final repentance is genuine. When a man comes to die, it is a different matter. Greene was stricken with remorse. That, to be sure, was mostly because he was also stricken with fear. He was terrified to his inmost soul. But the cause of remorse does not alter its reality.

"After he had pend the former discourse (then lying sore sicke of a surfeit which hee had taken with drinking) hee continued most patient and penitent; yea he did with teares forsake the world, renounced swearing, and desired forgiveness of God and the worlde for all his offences: so that during all the time of his sicknesse (which was about a moneths space) hee was never heard to sweare, rave, or blaspheme the name of God as he was accustomed to do before that time." "

When he wrote the paragraph quoted above, Cuthbert Burbie, the enterprising young publisher, no doubt had an eye to the edifying effect of such a complete repentance. At least his details do not agree with Gabriel Harvey's, whose account of Greene's death is most sordid. The truth, it may be, lies between the two. It is, after all, only a human picture as we think of Greene, conscience-smitten for his sins, renouncing his blasphemy and swearing, asking forgiveness of God and the world; at the same time, begging piteously for "a penny pot of Malmesby" at the hand of Mistress Isam.

Numquam sera est ad bonos mores via. It may be. But for Greene the day never came. Greene had the two elements in him of the flesh and the spirit, and he could never reconcile them. "This good motion lasted not long in mee," is his own comment of the experience at Norwich. A frank confession, — and very true, the confession of a weak will in terms of the excuse for the return to wrong-doing. The impression was vivid while it lasted. So was the final

" Vol. XII., p. 184.

repentance. Only then, there was no chance for Greene to lose it.

In concluding this chapter, perhaps we can relieve the darkness a little by a characteristic, and almost humorous, statement of Greene's. Here he is on his death-bed, poor fellow, trying to pray and condemning himself more severely than any other man who would be charitable could condemn him. "I was the child of perdition," is his judgment upon himself, and the punishment which will come is just and deserved. For his life has been bad and his pamphlets wanton. "But I thanke God," he says, — the old journalism instinct reviving, the pride in work accomplished, the desire to advertise his wares — "that he put it in my head to lay open the most horrible coosenages of the common Conny-catchers, Cooseners, and Crosbiters, which I have indifferently handled in those my several discourses already imprinted."⁴⁰

We may summarize this chapter briefly. Its subject *Sero sed serio* is applicable to all the works herein discussed. But those works are of two kinds. *Never too Late* and *Francescos Fortunes*, *Mourning Garment*, *Groatworth of Wit*, are prodigal-son stories; *Farewell to Follie* is a didactic narrative of the frame-work kind. Greene's *Vision* is an account of the repentance which inaugurated the series. All of these works I have not considered as different in any respect from the writings prepared before 1590. In the second class are the last few pages of *Groatworth of Wit* and the *Repentance*.

It is not unlike calling an actor before the final curtain just after we have seen him die in the tragedy, to continue a discussion of Greene's works after we have witnessed the death-scene. But the actor, even if we are a little startled

⁴⁰ Vol. XII., p. 178.

to realize it, is just as much alive as ever. So for our purposes, Greene is still alive and writing. In the latter half of 1590 he began that division of his works which deals in one way or another with repentance. By the end of the next year he had adopted a new motto — "We are born for the good of our country."

CHAPTER IV

NASCIMUR PRO PATRIA

IN 1591 Greene began a series of social pamphlets which, at very short intervals, continued to appear for several months. The first of these, *A Notable Discovery of Coosnage*, was licensed December 13. In that year also, and licensed the same day, appeared another, *The Second Part of Conny-catching*, with still a *Thirde and last Part*, entered on the Stationers' Register, February 7, 1592. Later were published the *Disputation Betweene a Hee and a Shee Conny-Catcher*, the *Quippe for an Upstart Courtier*, July 21, and the *Blacke Bookes Messenger*, August 21. This list should include, too, *The Defence of Conny Catching*, April 21, concerning the authorship of which there has been some discussion.

These pamphlets may, on account of their differences in social significance and depth, be divided into two groups; one group containing the *Disputation* and the *Quippe*, the other containing the rest of the works enumerated above.

Of the pamphlets which constitute the second, and larger, group, the three parts of conny-catching belong together. Rather, it should be said that the *Notable Discovery* and the *Second Part* belong together, and that the *Thirde Part* is really only a sort of appendix.

The *Notable Discovery of Coosnage*, the first of the series, opens with an epistle of eight pages "To the Reader," in the course of which Greene tells of his plan to expose the deceits practised upon "yong gentlemen, Marchants, Apprentises, Farmers, and plain Countreyemen" by the conny-catchers, the sly confidence men of the Capital. There are

two chief abuses in London: the art of conny-catching, deceit at cards; and the art of cross-biting, or the extortion of money from victims by the pretended (or real) husbands of the courtezans. Greene gives a brief account of the origin of card-playing, speaks of the evils done to innocent persons by the cheaters at cards, and develops his Epistle with an explanation of the old Barnard's Law,¹ or the process of cheating at cards. The body of the pamphlet consists of setting forth the art of conny-catching (a retelling in different terms of the Barnard's Law) illustrated by two tales; and of the manner in which the city harlots aid in "cros-biting" the silly connies, together with the story of a victim who turned the tables. The exposure of these two vices was not quite enough to fill up the pamphlet. In conclusion, then, there is the exposure of a deceit in no way related to the other two, the evil practices of the sellers of coals, illustrated by two tales.

The *Second Part* contains the "discovery of certaine wondrous coosenages, either superficialle past over or utterlie untoucht in the first."² It reveals the Prigging Law (horse-stealing), the Vincents Law (deceit at bowling), a discussion of the Nip (who cuts purses) and the Foist (who steals with his hand), the Lifting Law (larceny), the Courbing Law (hooking linen out of windows), and the Blacke Arte (picking of locks). The pamphlet contains nine tales. The *Thirde Part* consists entirely of tales of deceit, the tales being ten in number.

Greene sets forth the purpose of these works with considerable ostentation. His title-pages are no longer bespread with the *Omne tulit punctum* of the romances, or the *Sero sed serio* which announced the repentance of the prodigal

¹ "There was before this many yeeres agoe a practise put in use by such shifting companions, which was called the Barnard's Law." Vol. X., p. 9. ² Title-page to the *Second Part*, Vol. X.

son. There is instead the patriotic — but not for that reason, the less shrewd — *Nascimur pro patria*. Not content with printing the motto on the title-page, twice within the *Notable Discovery* itself Greene wishes a most unhappy end to these “base and dishonest caterpillars.” He bids us farewell, shouting as he goes, vauntingly, loudly that all may hear, his new found battle-cry.³

The statement of the patriotism which inspired the social pamphlets is repeated in the preface to the reader,

“those mad fellows I learned at last to loath, by their owne graceless villinies, and what I saw in them to their confusion, I can forewarne in others to my countries commodity.”⁴

It may be very true as Dr. Wolff⁵ says of such statements as these that Greene “believed that he was rendering a public service,” and that he was carrying on the ideal of the humanists that it is the business of a writer to serve the State. But I do not think that we do well to say much about the humanitarian purpose of these, or any other of Greene’s works. In the case of his fiction, Greene was quite as much — even more — interested in the production of what would sell as of what would edify. The two aims may have happened sometimes to coincide. But the fact that Greene tells us, and insists, that he means to edify cannot hinder our notion that at heart he was first of all a pamphleteer for profit. So with these social tracts. Greene may have been patriotic. There is no incompatibility, necessarily, between patriotism and journalistic instinct. What I am saying, and here I agree most fully with Mr. W. W. Greg,⁶ is that the

³ Vol. X., pp. 36, 50.

⁴ Vol. X., p. 6. Also p. 69, “no pains nor danger too great that groweth to the benefit of my countrie;” p. 97, “so I may profit my cuntrymen.” Also Preface to the *Third Part*.

⁵ Eng. Stud., p. 337, Vol. 37.

⁶ Modern Lang. Rev., April, 1906, Vol. I., p. 241.

avowed intention for writing the conny-catching pamphlets is not to be regarded too seriously.⁷

The relation between the *Notable Discovery* and the *Second Part* will illustrate my statement. In the first, as we have seen, Greene tells us of his plan to expose the wicked arts of conny-catching and of cross-biting. In the second, he carries on the exposure of other cheating practices, most of which are announced in the *Notable Discovery* (p. 51). But there are too, in this *Second Part*, references which have nothing to do with the exposures. These are the references to Greene himself and to the first pamphlet. The trade, Greene says, is "greatlie impoverished by the late editions of their secret villanies" (p. 88). A prospective conny avoids the snare with "Maisters, I bought a booke of late for a groate that warnes me of Card-playing. . . . I have forsworne cards ever since I read it" (p. 89). Not long afterward, a man who had been cozened chanced to come to Greene's chamber, "where he found a book of Cony-catching new come out of the presse. . . . Sir, said he, If I had seene this booke but two dayes since, it had saved me nine pound in my purse" (p. 96).

Greene answers the objection "that some inferred against me, which was, that I shewed no eloquent phrases, nor fine figurative conveyance in my first booke as I have done in other of my workes" (p. 71).⁸ And finally he refers to the

⁷ Harman tells us on the title-page of his *Caveat or Warning, for Common Curselors* (1566? 1567) that he is writing "for the utilitie and proffyt of his naturall Countrey." And again he says in his epistle "To the Reader" that "faithfullie for the proffyt and benyfyt of my countrey I have don it." (*The Rogues and Vagabonds of Shakespeare's Youth*, Ed. by Viles and Furnivall. Shakespeare Library 1907.) Greene has several similarities to Harman.

⁸ In the failure to use "eloquent phrases" Greene resembles Harman when he wrote the *Caveat*. "Although, good Reader, I wright in plain termes — and not so playnly as truely — concerning the matter,

threats that have come to him from the conny-catchers that they will "cut off my right hand, for penning doune their abhominable practises: but alas for them, poore snakes, words are wind, & looks but glances: every thunderclap hath not a bolt, nor every Conny-catchers oath an execution. I live still, & I live to display their villanies" (p. 70).⁹

All these references to the first pamphlet sound perfectly natural, appearing as they do in the second; and we are really led to believe that Greene's works were making considerable of a stir and that he himself was manifesting much bravery to continue in such dangerous revelations of the underworld. But our belief in the genuineness of the whole performance is considerably shattered when we remember that in all probability the *Notable Discovery* and the *Second Part* were published at the same time,¹⁰ and that the refer-

meaning honestly to all men, and wyshe them as much good as to myne owne harte; yet, as there hathe been, so there is now, and hereafter wylbe, curyous heds to finde fautes: — well, this delycat age shall have his tyrne on the other syde. Eloquence have I none; I never was acquainted with the muses; I never tasted of Helycon. But accordinge to my plaine order, I have set forth this worke, simplye and truelye, with such usual words and termes as is amongst us wel known and frequented." (Ed. Viles and Furnivall, 1907, pp. 27–8.)

Greene's reason for the simple style is different from Harman's. Whereas Harman declared himself unable to use any other, Greene had already manifested repeatedly his ability to do so. His reply to the objection made against him is that he thinks a "certaine decorum is to bee kept in everie thing, and not to applie a high stile in a base subject: . . . Therefore humbly I crave pardon and desire I may write basely of such base wretches." (Vol. X., p. 71.)

⁹ Cf. Harman, p. 22. "Now, me thinketh, I se how these pevysh, perverse, and pestilent people begyn to freat, fume, sweare, and stare at this my booke, their lyfe being laid open and apparantly poynted out, that their confusion and end draweth one a pase."

¹⁰ Both works were licensed 13 Dec., 1591. Both bear the date 1591 on their title-pages. And they were put out by different publishers. It is only reasonable, then, to suppose that both were written about

ences to the former are, therefore, most likely pure fictions. This theory is borne out by the mention near the end of the *Notable Discovery*¹¹ of several of the "laws" exposed in the *Second Part*,— as if the *Second Part* were already planned but there was found to be room for "legering" (cheating with coal) in the *Notable Discovery*— and further by Greene's manner of speaking of the threats and the conny-catchers. In the epistle "To the Reader" of the *Notable Discovery* Greene "foresees" the danger that will come to him from his exposures. "Yet Gentlemen am I sore threatened by the hacksters of that filthie facultie, that if I set their practises in print, they will cut off that hande that writes the Pamphlet,"¹² a statement in no wise different from that in the *Second Part* as follows: "I know I shall have many braves uttered against me for this invective."¹³

Greene, viewed in this light, is not, then, a patriotic champion ready to die for a cause. He is a self-advertising

the same time, inasmuch as by 7 Feb., 1592, Greene had the *Thirde and last Part* on the market.

¹¹ Vol. X., p. 51. "I omitted divers other divelish vices; as the nature of the *lift*, the *black art* &."

¹² Vol. X., p. 12.

¹³ Vol. X., p. 97. Again like Harman. See above, note 9. See also Audeley, *The Fraternitie of Vacabondes*. Ed. Viles and Furnivall, p. 2.

"But if my fellowes do know (sayd he)

That thus I dyd, they would kyll me."

The Printer to the Reader.

Greene has another point of similarity to Harman. Harman unites, *writes* he says, for the benefit of the thieves as well as of the country. He hopes that "in the world to com they may save their Soules" so that his writing "shall do them more good than they could have devised for them selves." (p. 22). Greene puts it thus: "Were it not that I hope for their amendment, I would in a schedule set doune the names of such coosening cunny-catchers." Vol. X., p. 12.

journalist.¹⁴ This is not at all to be severe on him, or even disparaging. What it means is that our conception of Greene must be less serious. Although the conny-catching pamphlets do lose some of their sociological value, their interest is not lessened. Instead of regarding their author as an ardent defender of the common weal, we are to enjoy him as a literary artificer. Two smaller pamphlets — a *First* and a *Second Part* — sold to two publishers would bring more than a larger pamphlet put out by one man.

There is no doubt that the seriousness with which Greene's conny-catching pamphlets have been regarded has come partly at least from certain statements of his in the earlier works, statements which have been interpreted as meaning that Greene had long contemplated the writing of these disclosures.¹⁵ The whole question of the understanding of these passages is, of course, bound up with the question of the 1590 religious experience spoken of in the *Vision*. That question cannot be taken up here.¹⁶ But so far as these passages and the conny-catching pamphlets are concerned, I can see no reason for thinking that there is any definite relation between them.

In the first place, the promise of "deeper matters" does not, perhaps, mean anything more than a conventional phrase.¹⁷

¹⁴ The putting out of the conny-catching pamphlets with their display of patriotism is not the first time in Greene's life that he adapted himself to the occasion. In 1585 when he put out the *Planetomachia* he was "Student in Phisicke." In 1589, when any pamphlet with "Spanish" in its title would sell, Greene was on hand with his *Spanish Masquerado* under the pretext of adventuring "to discover my conscience in Religion."

¹⁵ See Greene, ed. Dickinson, Mermaid Series, 1909, Introduction, p. xxvii.

¹⁶ See pp. 70-71.

¹⁷ See above, pp. 69-72. Also *A Petite Pallace of Pettie His Pleasure*, Ed. by Gollancz, p. 7. "Thus have I sent you in that book some fruits of my former folly, and in this letter the profession of my present faith. . . . I mean . . . the next Spring to go on pilgrimage."

In the second place, it does not seem reasonable to think that if Greene had had definitely in mind the task of writing exposures he would have continued putting out pamphlets for which he had to, or at least did, apologize. It is possible, to be sure, that the prodigal stories sold better than he anticipated, and that he was keeping the conny-catching pamphlets in reserve. But it does not seem likely, from what we know of Greene, that he would have waited for a year and a half (from the middle of 1590 when he first promised to do serious writing until the end of 1591) to put into effect an idea which had suggested to him a new line of work.

Another consideration which causes me to think that the conny-catching pamphlets were written as a journalistic venture purely, and not that they were written because Greene had definite information to convey in regard to the dangerous practices of the metropolis is the fact that the inspiration of conny-catching, apparently, (and the material, certainly) came from a little pamphlet published in England a good many years before. This pamphlet was the *Manifest Detection of Dyce Play* (1552), from which, to be brief, Greene got all he knew about cheating at cards. In his Epistle to the Reader, Greene copies verbatim two pages from the earlier pamphlet, the very important passage, that is, in which the *modus operandi* of the Barnard's Law is explained.¹⁸ This old Barnard's Law of the *Manifest Detec-*

§ Barnard's Law: — Four persons are required, the Taker-up, the Verser, the Barnard, and the Rutter. The Taker-up makes the acquaintance of the victim and draws him to a tavern. With him goes the Verser, who hath "the countenance of a landed man." They all sit down. In comes the Barnard, like an old farmer. The Barnard teaches the Verser a "new" card game he has just learned. They begin to play for money. If the victim "smoake them" and starts away, the Rutter creates a disturbance. A crowd gathers, and the Barnard steals away with all the money.

tion constitutes without change, except in very minor details,¹⁹ Greene's art of conny-catching in the *Notable Discovery*, and forms the basis of the long and "pleasant tale of the connie-catchers"²⁰ in the *Second Part*. Mum-chance, the only game mentioned in Greene, is, in other words, copied from a pamphlet forty years old.

From the *Manifest Detection*, Greene copies also the passage²¹ regarding the use of the word "law" among the members of the underworld and the passage²² in which a conny-catcher refuses conversion on the ground that no man can live honestly. Such borrowings as these, in addition to that spoken of above, show very definitely where the impulse to write conny-catching pamphlets came from,

¹⁹ The principal change is in the names of the persons taking part. The following extract from Rowlands is of considerable interest in this connection as showing that the names for these parties either were numerous at any one time or changed from year to year: "There hath beene of late daies published two merrie and pithie Pamphlets of the arte of Conicatching: wherin the Author hath sufficiently expressed his experience, as also his loue to his Countreie. Neuerthelesse with the Authors leaue, I will ouerlooke some lawe tearmes expressed in the first part of Conicatching: whereunto, as the Author saith, is necessarilie required three parties: *The setter, the Verser and the Barnacle*. Indeed I haue heard some retainers to this ancient trade dispute of his proceedings in this case and by them in a full Synode of quart pots it was thorowlie examined and concluded, that there were no such names as he hath set downe, nor anie cheating Arte so christened as Conicatching. . . . But all this breakes no square, so long as we concurre in *eodem subiecto*." *Greenes Ghost haunting Conicatchers*, 1602. Rowlands' Works, Vol. I., p. 7. Hunterian Club.

²⁰ Vol. X., p. 91. I do not accept Mr. Aydelotte's discussion of Greene's borrowing. "In so far as Greene has a literary original for his conny-catching books, it is this pamphlet." (p. 120). . . . "These plagiarisms are all in comparatively unimportant passages" (p. 125). Oxford Historical and Literary Studies, Vol. I., *Elizabethan Rogues and Vagabonds*. By Frank Aydelotte.

²¹ Vol. X., p. 33.

²² Vol. X., pp. 34-5.

and make me disinclined to believe that they were the outcome of any long premeditation.²³

In connection with the question of the attitude which we are to take toward these pamphlets of Greene's there is still another point to be borne in mind. That is his boast of the accuracy, and directness of the sources, of his information. We may hear Greene's own words:

"Though I haue not practised their deceits, yet conuersing by fortune, and talking vpon purpose with such copes-mates, hath geuen mee light into their conceits, and I can decipher their qualities, though I utterly mislike of their practises."²⁴

For such insistence upon the truth of his writing Greene may very well have gotten the hint from a work like Harman's *Caveat* or from Lodge's *Alarum against Usurers*, of which the authors say that what they write is direct, the information of the former obtained from the beggars with whom he talked at his gate,²⁵ that of the latter from personal observation or the testimony of victims.²⁶ Whether these

²³ The haphazard manner in which the *Second Part* is put together is another indication of haste.

²⁴ Vol. X., p. 6.

²⁵ "I . . . have kepte a house these twenty yeares, where unto poverty dayley hath and doth repayre, not without some reliefe, as my poore callinge and habyltyie maye and doth extende: I have of late yeares gathered a great suspition that all should not be well. . . . I, havinge more occation, through sicknes, to tary and remayne at home then I have bene accustomed, do, by my there abydinge, talke and confere dayly with many of these wyly wanderers . . . by whom I have gathered and understand their depe dissimulation." Ed. Viles and Furnivall, p. 20.

²⁶ "What is sette downe heere, eyther as an eye witnesse I will avowe, or informed even by those Gentlemen, who have swallowed the Gudgen." Lodge. Hunterian Club. Vol. I.

There are many points of similarity between Lodge's *Alarum against Usurers* and such works as the *Manifest Detection* and Greene's conny-catching pamphlets, particularly in the manner in which a victim is first approached.

two men are truthful it is not for us to inquire. My belief in regard to Greene is that he, taking his attitude from them and pretending to be a personal observer, is not necessarily so,—from anything that Greene's pamphlets indicate.

When one examines closely, one finds that there is really very little in Greene's first three social pamphlets which is in the nature of information, and that there is a gradual progression in the amount of the narrative portion throughout the series. *The Notable Discovery* has a comparatively small number of tales, the *Second Part* increases the number, and the *Thirde Part* consists entirely of stories,—with no new "laws" added whatever.

The increase in the number of included tales is an indication that in his conny-catching pamphlets Greene has done the same thing that he did in many of his earlier works. Just as in *Perymedes*, for example, where he starts out, avowedly, to show us how to spend our time in quiet, but where he becomes more interested in his illustrative stories than in his frame-work and develops them for their own fiction's sake, so here in these pamphlets he grows to be interested in telling snappy tales which are justified by their own vivacity and narrative excellence. Harman, for all his sociological insight, enjoyed telling the few tales he has included,²⁷ and he told them well. It was characteristic of the whole type of pamphleting to include tales.²⁸ But Greene carries the idea farther than it had been carried before and farther than it was carried after. That is, in a sense, the conny-catching pamphlets come in his hands to be a series of frame-work tales.

To say this is putting it too strongly, of course. Greene

²⁷ Especially those on pp. 37, 42, 61, 68, of his *Caveat*, Ed. Viles and Furnivall.

²⁸ See *Lodge's Alarum against Usurers* and the works of Rowlands and Dekker.

did have a certain body of information to convey. But that information does not seem, of necessity, to have been obtained from direct knowledge. Indeed, it does not seem to have been obtained so at all. If Greene were as well acquainted with the vices of London as he would have us believe, we are at a loss to understand why it is that he knows only one "cheating law," and why he should have copied that one law verbatim in one portion of his pamphlet and have merely varied it slightly in others. And again, one is at a loss to understand such passages as those in the foot-note²⁹ if they do not mean that Greene had no definite information upon that particular matter. That is, a man who

* "Were it not I hope of their amendment I would in a schedule set downe the names of such coosening cunny-catchers." Vol. X., p. 12. This setting forth of names was something which Greene was ever threatening but which he never performed, even when he knew that his recovery was hopeless. The nearest he comes to it is the mention by name of Lawrence Pickering of Kent street, brother-in-law to Bull the hangman, in whose house the crew is accustomed to meet weekly. (Harman describes the weekly meeting.) But as a matter of fact, there is no guarantee that Lawrence Pickering (the pickpocket) is not a fictitious being

"by chance fel among cony-catchers, whose names I omit, because I hope of their amendment." p. 31.

"Pardon me Gentlemen for although no man could better than myself discover this lawe and his tearmes, and the name of their cheats, Barddice, Flats, Forgers, Langreta, Gourds, Demies, and many other, with their nature, and the crosses and contraries to them upon advantage, yet for some speciall reasons, herein I will be silent." These "tearmes" are mentioned, but not explained, in the *Manifest Detection*, pp. 27-8.

"they will straight spotte him (the horse) by sundry pollicies, . . . which secretes I omit, least I shoulde give too great a light to other to practise such lewd villanies." p. 77.

"for every sundry fashion thay have a sundry term, but I am ignorant of their woords of art, and therefore I omit them." p. 128. See other similar statements, Vol. X., pp. 91, 145, 164, 172.

can explain nine laws from his own observation surely cannot be expected to fail on the tenth.

Greene's statement of accuracy, "I have seen, but I did not participate," implies that, though he may never have actually helped in conny-catching, Greene knew the lowest classes of society and led a wicked life with those companions who, he says, "came still to my lodging, and then would continue quaffing, carousing, and surfeting with me all the day long."³⁰ But the statement seems to imply also that this acquaintance is the basis for the disclosures about to be made. I am not going to deny, in any way, that Greene's life was not praiseworthy and that he did not associate with such persons as those of whom he speaks. I am making no attempt to build up Greene's shattered reputation. I am only asking whether, after all, we should not deprive him, in connection with these conny-catching pamphlets, of the title he lays claim to as "comrade of the disreputable," and confer upon him another,—that of being a "literary liar." In short, may the "accuracy" have been manufactured for the sake of the verisimilitude it then, and has since, afforded? "I have shotte," Greene confesses in one of his latest writings, "at many abuses, over shotte myselfe in describing of some: where truth failed my invention hath stood my friend."³¹

What I have said about Greene thus far in the present chapter has been mostly negative, in the way of discarding certain views which have been held with regard to him. Greene claims, and has been considered, to be original, to be serious, to be patriotic. I fail to see wherein we can justifiably concede any one of these epithets.

This portion of his work which we have been discussing, I am aware, is usually thought of — however little we may

³⁰ Vol. XII., p. 178.

³¹ *Greenes Vision*, To the Gentlemen Readers. Vol. XII., pp. 195-6.

agree to Greene's own description of the rest of it as the offspring of Follie — as his most genuine, most earnest product. I formerly held this opinion. "Once into the thing," I wrote, "Greene goes to work with zest. For the first time, perhaps, in his life, he is really in earnest. All his faculties are awakened, and he enjoys the conflict he has on his hands."

But there is this fact about a continued study of Greene. The more one knows of him, the less one finds that is sincere, that comes from depth of character, from bigness of attitude toward life, from definiteness of personality at all,— the less one finds that is in reality Greene's; the more one finds that is only a new expression (and often not very new either) of some one else's thought and plan and purpose.

The becoming aware of the state of things cannot, however, be called exactly a disillusionment. For it is not disillusionment, even when one by one the attributions to Greene's own originality grow smaller and smaller, as scholars investigate the sources of his work and as we cease to be surprised when we learn that a pamphlet or a plot we thought to be his is only a copy or an imitation of another's. It is very necessary, though, if such a process as that I speak of is not to result in utter disregard for Greene, to formulate our conception of him in a way such as will enable us to look beyond the mere borrowing and imitating and to unify these various activities of his and make them, for all their superficiality, have some significance. If we cannot judge him on the basis of a sober litterateur, for the reason that he is, on that basis, unstable, intangible, we can at least estimate him as a man of letters who sometimes rose almost to the plane of artistic writing, who sometimes fell to the plane of cheap journalism. In this second class I should place the pamphlets we have been discussing. In fact, I should say that in none of his other work is Greene

so much the charlatan as in these social pamphlets of the first group.

We have seen Greene's methods and his attitude as they are revealed in the three parts of conny-catching. It is time now to turn to the later works.

On April 21, 1592, there was entered on the Stationers' Register "The Defense of Conny Catching, or A Confutation of Those two injurious Pamphlets published by R. G. against the practitioners of many nimble-witted and mysticall Sciences. By Cuthbert Cunny-catcher." The author pretends to be a "Licentiate in Whittington Colledge,"²² and promises to tell what he has learned in that place and in his subsequent travels about England. He is very angry, he says, that Greene should have omitted entirely the many grosser evils which abound in London, and he is going to undertake the task with which he thinks Greene should have been occupied.

Of real exposition, however, there is very little in the book. Cuthbert Cunny-catcher seems to have been uninterested in his subject itself, or else to have had little direct information to convey. What knowledge he had, he gives indirectly. The bulk of the material is comprised in six stories, clever in themselves, and not different from those

²² The author of the *Defence* took the idea from Greene's mention of Whittington College in the Preface to the *Last Part*. "In the time of king Henrie the fourth, . . . lived a worthie Gentleman . . . called sir Richard Whittington, the founder of Whittington Colledge in London." Vol. X., pp. 139-40.

From a gloss in the margin, "Newgate builded by one Whittington," it is clear that he means the Newgate prison rebuilt by Whittington's executors, and not the Whittington College proper also established by his directions, which Greene had in mind in the *Last Part*. (Founded 1424; suppressed 1548) For article on Whittington see the Dictionary of Nat. Biog. Whittington was the subject of popular tradition, which may account for the mention of him here.

of the three parts of conny-catching. Indeed, taken out of the frame-work in which they occur, or found in any of the other pamphlets known to be Greene's, these six tales would pass readily for Greene's own.

One of them, the tale of Will Sommers, is an adaptation of the old story of the division of a nut among the disputants for it, telling how the fool as arbitrator divides the nut-shell between two lawyers, and bestows the kernel upon a friend of his, the "Yoeman of the Pantry." Another is a tale of a usurer and of how the wife of his victim secured her revenge; one of a miller and a boy who discovers his trickery; a fourth, of a false tailor whose deceit is revealed by pretended necromancy. The remaining two deal with marriage, one showing how a pauper's son under disguise manages to marry a rich man's daughter; the other being the story of a man in England who has sixteen wives, and of the means by which he meets his punishment at the hands of two of them.

The story of Will Sommers, the fool, is insignificant. That of the pauper's son is good until near the end. There the story is stopped rather than finished, so that the conclusion is far from satisfactory.³³ The other four tales are of some merit. They are told with the firmness and directness which characterize the good examples of the *novelle*, and they carry the reader with them whether in the spirit of comedy, as in the stories of the miller and of the tailor; or of revenge, as in the stories of the usurer and of the man with the many wives. All four are genuinely interesting; all four are told with skill.

For all that the pamphlet is made up principally of these

³³ At the discovery of her new husband's estate, the "wife began to weepe, all was dasht, and what she thought God knowes." . . . But they could not change matters; so "for al that he had the wench." Vol. XI., p. 84.

six stories, the *Defence of Conny-catching* is, however, ostensibly an attack upon Greene. The author brings a severe charge, that Greene might have been better employed with exposing these great and far-reaching vices than with writing against the "poore conny-catchers" who are, when the worst is said, only as gnats compared to elephants. Cuthbert is, therefore, to champion his fraternity against the common enemy.

He is not a particularly valiant defender. His attack is by no means venomous. The method which he uses is that of shouting abusive language³⁴ and of hurling taunts at Greene because he did not include these very important exposures in his books.³⁵ The ardor he displays is assumed, not genuine. In fact, this very quality of non-abusiveness (clearly perceivable, even beneath the show of invincible hatred), has linked Greene's own name with the pamphlet under the view that Greene and Cuthbert Cunny-catcher are one and the same person.

Dr. Grosart has included this pamphlet in his collection of Greene's works,³⁶ but he does not believe that Greene is the author of it. He is positive in his belief. "The most superficial reading of the clever 'Defence'" he says, "would have shown that it is against not by Greene."³⁷ If the reading were superficial enough, we may grant that the

³⁴ As for example: "I meane to have a bout with this R. G. and to give him such a veny, that he shalbe afrayd heereafter to disparage that mysticall science of conny-catching." p. 47.

"I cannot but wonder maister R. G. what Poeticall fury made you so fantasticke, to write against conny-catchers? Was your brain so barren that you had no other subject?" p. 49.

³⁵ "Why write you not of these Conny-catchers maister R. G.?" p. 52. "Was not this Miller a Conny-catcher maister R. G.?" p. 68. "I pray you call you not these fine witted fellowes Conny-catchers Maister R. G.?" p. 75.

³⁶ Vol. XI., pp. 39-104.

³⁷ Vol. XI., p. 40.

Defence might be so understood. But as I have intimated, the combativeness is very slight indeed. To the support of Grosart comes Prof. H. C. Hart in his notes on "Robert Greene's Prose Works."²⁸ Professor Hart does not believe the attack upon Greene to be in any way more than sheer pretence. But he maintains that Greene is not the author of the *Defence* on grounds which he believes to be sufficient evidence for a decision. With the exception of Professor Hart's notes the question of authorship has received no discussion. It may be worth while, therefore, to deal with the problem here, for I do not agree with Professor Hart that the case has been definitely settled against Greene.

Professor Hart notices in the first place that the *Defence* is written against "those *two* injurious Pamphlets," when there are in reality "the three parts of Connie Catching and the Disputation." He believes that the writer of the *Defence* lumps the first three as one, counting the *Disputation* as the second. Without saying so, he lets us infer that he considers this discrepancy as an objection to Greene's authorship. I do not see how the reference to the "two" pamphlets rather than to three or four has anything to do with the question of authorship. But even if it has, I cannot agree to this disposition of the pamphlets. The *Disputation* is not entered on the Stationers' Register, but there is no reason for believing that it was necessarily written before April 21, the date of the *Defence*, and not between that date and July 21, the date of the *Quippe*. This makes the *Disputation* and the *Quippe* contiguous in date as they are, indeed, in significance, and leaves then only three pamphlets appearing before the *Defence*. But even with these three, there is no difficulty in explaining the *two* on the title-page of the *Defence*. Only the first two parts contain exposures of deceptions. The *Last Part* is made up wholly of stories.

²⁸ Notes and Queries. 10th Ser. V., p. 84, Feb. 3, 1906.

There was thus no reason for including the *Last Part* among the "injurious pamphlets published by R. G." Professor Hart's objection is, therefore, without value until the date of the *Disputation* is established.³⁹

If the *Defence* is really by Greene, Professor Hart expects to find some mention of it in Greene's later works. He does not give the basis for his expectation. Again I find no perceivable relation between Greene's failure to mention the *Defence* in his subsequent works and Professor Hart's statement that he did not write it. The *Quippe* contains no mention of the *Disputation*, which certainly preceded it.⁴⁰ Nor does *The Blacke Bookes Messenger*, the last of them all, mention either the *Disputation* or the *Quippe*. Why should Greene's later work, then, be expected to mention the *Defence*? And what justification have we for saying that the failure to do so is an adequate basis of decision?

So far as Professor Hart's next point is concerned, that of the celebrated reference to Greene's having sold the play of *Orlando Furioso* to the Lord Admiral's men while the Queen's players, to whom he had sold it earlier, were in the country,—the failure on Greene's part to refute the charge cannot, it seems to me, be taken to prove that Greene did not write the *Defence*. "No doubt," says Professor Hart, "every one knew it, and it was useless to attempt to do so."

³⁹ In the *Disputation* Greene mentions only the first of the series. "R. G. hath so amply pend them doune in the first part of Conny-catching" (Vol. X., p. 206). Also, "since the setting out of my booke" (p. 236).

Samuel Rowlands mentions only two: "There hath beene of late daies published two merrie and pithie Pamphlets of the arte of Conicatching." *Greenes Ghost Haunting Conicatchers*. 1602. Hunterian Club, p. 7.

⁴⁰ The *Quippe* was licensed July 21. Greene's activities and his illness during the month of August make it impossible that the *Disputation* followed the *Quippe*.

It is quite as reasonable to believe that the play was not resold at all. We have only Cuthbert Conny-catcher's word for it. May not the reference be merely another of the kind used in the *Second Part* to give an air of verisimilitude to the attack?

The final objection to Greene's authorship is a list of words and phrases to be found nowhere else but in the *Quippe*. The presence of the words in the *Quippe* cannot, of course, be taken as a final argument either for or against Greene's authorship of the *Defence*. If Greene had wanted the words in the *Quippe*, he would have taken them whether the *Defence* were his own or belonged to some one else. But as for the *Defence*, Professor Hart concludes on the basis of this word list that Greene did not write it, saying that "it was written by some confederate or friend jointly perhaps."

This word list is of considerable importance. The presence of many of the words in the *Quippe*, however, detracts from its decisiveness. Greene's habit of miscellaneous appropriations makes his vocabulary variable. How are we to tell whether this pamphlet of the *Defence* was written "by some confederate or friend" whose identity is unknown, or by Greene himself, who interspersed it with words picked up from some unknown source? It is not necessary to look for these strange words in Greene's works before April 21, 1592. And when we come to examine the later ones, we actually do find many of the words repeated in the *Quippe*.

Professor Hart admits that the *Defence* is not in reality, as Dr. Grosart said it was, against Greene, and that the attack is only a pretence. He thinks that perhaps Greene had a hand in the production of it. Having gone so far in the acknowledgment of Greene's authorship, I do not see why we cannot go the rest of the way, at least tentatively.

There are no objections which can be held with certainty. And there are considerations which I believe make it more reasonable than not to regard Greene as the author.

There is a statement in the *Second Part* which favors the idea of Greene's authorship.

" . . . they in their huffes report that they have got one () I will not bewray his name, but a scholler they say he is, to make an invective against me."

Now the *Second Part* was published in 1591, at the same time as the *Notable Discovery*.⁴¹ It looks a little strange, therefore, if Greene was not himself contemplating the writing of the *Defence*, that he should have known, in the week or two before his pamphlets had had time to create any appreciable effect, that the conny-catchers had employed a scholar⁴² to come to their defence. Nor does it seem at all far-fetched to presume that Greene is taking the opportunity to advertise the *Defence* just as he advertised a great many of his works before and after, and just as we shall presently find the author of the *Defence* doing.⁴³

⁴¹ See p. 85 seq.

⁴² In the *Defence* Cuthbert speaks of Greene as a scholar. "I began to enquire what this R. G. should bee. At last I learned that hee was a scholler, and a Maister of Artes." p. 47. Greene was proud of being a "scholler" and of his "Utriusq. Academiae in Artibus Magister." One can easily infer that if Greene is announcing an anonymous work by himself, he would very naturally proclaim it to be by a "scholler."

⁴³ This idea of advertisements and continuations appealed to Greene's journalistic instinct. After Pharicles departed from Padua at the end of the *First Part of Mamillia*, "as soone as I shal either hear, or learn of his aboad," says Greene, "looke for newes by a speedy Post." The "newes" came, and with it came the *Second Part of Mamillia*. It is one of the interesting things to note in connection with this idea of continuations that, at the end of the *Second Part*, Greene promises still a *Third*, a promise not fulfilled, so far as we know. ("Whether Pharicles proved as inconstant a husband as a faithless wooer, I knowe

A second consideration that connects Greene and the authorship is that of certain similarities between the *Defence* and Greene's acknowledged works. One of these is the identity in tone between the reference to the *Notable Discovery* and the *Second Part* in the *Defence*, and the references to the *Notable Discovery* in the *Second Part*.⁴⁴ A second similarity is that existing between a passage in the *Defence* and one in the *Disputation*;⁴⁵ still a third is that between the *Defence*

not: but if it be my hap to heare, looke for newes as speedilie as may be.") Other novels by Greene have this same promise of continuation, sometimes fulfilled, sometimes not: *Morando*, Vol. III., p. 109; *Penelopes Web*, Vol. V., p. 233 (but it is not known what Greene means by his reference to the "Paraphrase"); *Perymedes*, Vol. VII., p. 85; *Never too Late*, Vol. VIII., p. 109; *Francescos Fortunes*, Vol. VIII., p. 229, promises further news of the palmer; *Farewell to Follie*, Vol. IX., p. 348, is sometimes understood to imply a continuation.

The instinct for journalism which prompted these continuations was also manifested in the promise of other works soon to appear. Thus in the Preface to *Perymedes*, Greene speaks of *Orpharion* to make us merry with at the next term (Vol. VII., p. 9). At the end of *Never too Late* (Vol. VIII., p. 109) he promises not only a continuation in *Francescos Fortunes*, but also alludes to his *Farewell to Follie*. The *Disputation* definitely promises the *Blacke Booke*, Vol. X., pp. 225, 236.

⁴⁴ For example these passages:

1. "Yet I have for 3. pence bought a little Pamphlet, that hath taught me to smoke such a couple of knaves as you be." *Defence*, p. 45.
2. "Maisters, I boughte a booke for a groate that warnes me of Card-play." *Second Part*, p. 89.

See also *Defence*, p. 47.

- ⁴⁵ 1. "I got one of those bookes . . . wherein I found our art so perfectly anatomized, as if he had bene practitioner in our facultie forty winters before." *Defence*, pp. 45-6.
2. "I need not describe the lawes of villanie, because R. G. hath so amply pend them downe in the first part of Conny-catching, that though I be one of the facultie, yet I cannot discover more than hee hath layde open." *Disputation*, p. 206.

and *The Blacke Bookes Messenger*.⁴⁶ And lastly there is the resemblance between one of the stories in the *Defence* and the story of Valdracko in *Planetomachia*. The likeness may be purely coincidental. At any rate, Pasylla's tying her father to his bed is repeated in the story of the man with the sixteen wives, two of whom tie him to his bed in the same way.

The next indication of Greene's authorship of the *Defence* is in the method of its conclusion. The idea of advertising a following pamphlet is carried out. "It is informed us," says Cuthbert, "that you are in hand withe a booke named *The repentance of a Conny-catcher*." This work is the same as that mentioned in the preface to *The Blacke Bookes Messenger* which Greene had intended to publish along with the life and death of Ned Browne, and which he still intended to put forth.⁴⁷ In another respect the conclusion to the *Defence* is interesting. It is marked by a strikingly paradoxical tone. Throughout the work, the author has been professedly Greene's bitter enemy. At the end he urges Greene most heartily to publish this repentance he has in mind. "If you doe so, ye shal do not onely a charitable, but a meritorious deed." And he threatens that if Greene fails to do so, he will have the "crue of Conny-catchers sweare themselves your professed enemies for ever."

⁴⁶ The passages are about the Conny-catchers' pretended acquaintance with the Continent, whereas they have never been out of England. They are too long to transcribe. See *Defence*, pp. 74-5, and *Blacke Bookes Messenger*, pp. 24-7.

⁴⁷ "I had thought to have joyned with this Treatise, a pithy discourse of the Repentance of a Conny-catcher lately executed out of Newgate, yet forasmuch as the Methode of the one is so far differing from the other, I altered my opinion, and the rather for that the one died resolute and desperate, the other penitent and passionate. For the Conny-catchers repentance which shall shortly be published, it containes a passion of great importance."

It may be said in connection with the *Defence* as a whole that if Greene wished to write another conny-catching pamphlet he would scarcely have gone to all this trouble of posing as his own enemy, and that he would have put out a *Fourth Part* or something of that nature. Yet we have only to remember that in the *Disputation*, which we shall discuss presently, Greene actually does write from the point of view of those whom he is attacking. For in the *Disputation*, Lawrence and Nan are quite as bitter against the "scholler" R. G. as ever Cuthbert Conny-catcher was.

In concluding this matter I should like to call attention to what is apparently a step in the Greene-Harvey-Nashe quarrel.⁴⁸ The quarrel was already on its way when Richard Harvey in 1590 published his *Lamb of God* in which he attacked Nashe as being impudent. Then, as Mr. McKerrow says, "some two years seem to have elapsed before any attempt was made by the writers criticised to reply."⁴⁹ There is no explanation for this long silence. "But there seems to be nothing," Mr. McKerrow adds, "in any of Greene's works at least, before the Quip, which can be interpreted as a hit at him. It is possible that there were intermediate links in the quarrel, of which we know nothing." It is one of these intermediate links that is to be found in the *Defence*.

"Wert not a merry yeast to have a bout againe Maister R. G. with your poetical Brethren: amongst the which one learned Hypocrite, that could brooke no abuses in the Commonwealth, was so zealous that he began to put an English she Saint in the Legend, for the holinesse of her life: and forgot not so much as her dogge, as Tobies was remembered, that wagged taylor at the sight of his olde Mistresse. This pure Martinist (if he were not worse) had a combat betweene the flesh

* Mr. McKerrow, in his edition of Nashe (London 1904-10) has traced out in detail (Vol. V., pp. 65-110) the account of this whole wretched affair.

* McKerrow's Nashe, Vol. V., p. 77.

and the spirite, that he must needes have a wife, which he cunningly conny-catcht in this manner. *A pleasant Tale how a holy brother Conny-catcht for a Wife.*⁵⁰

The story which follows of the pauper's son who married the rich man's daughter is no doubt fictitious. But the story and the passage I have quoted were meant in all probability as a slur upon the Harveys, Richard in particular. That this inference is well grounded is shown by two similar references to Richard Harvey in subsequent pamphlets:

1. "The best is, the persons abused, are not altogether unknown, they have not so evell a neighbor, that ever reade, or hearde those opprobrious villainies (it is too-mild a name, for my brother Richardes most abhominable Legend, who frameth himselfe to live as chastely as the leawde writer affected to live beastly) but hath presentlie broken out into some such earnest, or more passionate speeches: o pestilent knavery, who ever heard such arrant forgeries, and ranke lies?" *Thirde Letter*, September 8 and 9, 1592. Harvey, Ed. Grosart, Vol. I., p. 186.

2. "It was not for nothing brother Richard, that *Greene* told you you kist your Parishioners wives with holy kisses, for you that wil talk . . . in a Theological Treatise, and in the Pulpit, I am afraide in a privater place you will practise as much as you speake. . . . Farewell uncleane Vicar, and God make thee an honest man." *Foure Letters Confuted*, January 12, 1593. Nashe, Ed. McKerrow. Vol. I., p. 273.

The passage to which Nashe refers is no doubt the lost passage in the *Quippe*,⁵¹ in which Greene attacked all the Harveys at once. It is clear at any rate, that Greene did accuse Richard Harvey of loose living. My conviction is that we have here in the *Defence*, three months before the publication of the *Quippe*, the same kind of attack (or perhaps the same attack) as that which Nashe has in mind.

I do not wish to be understood, in passing from the *Defence* to the last pamphlet of the first group, as thinking

⁵⁰ Vol. XI., p. 79.

⁵¹ Nashe, Vol. V., p. 77.

that the intrinsic importance of the *Defence* is entirely proportional to the length of the discussion bestowed upon it. But tedious as it is, such a discussion is not without value as emphasizing what I believe is the method back of all of these social pamphlets of Greene's. The very fact that there is a problem of authorship connected with the *Defence* only urges the more strongly the idea that Greene's work is not the product of a serious, patriotic purpose to convey definite, accurate information. Rather we owe the existence of the pamphlets to Greene's necessity. Nashe tells us that "in a night and a day" Greene would have "yarkt up a Pamphlet as well as in seaven yeare" . . . and this too because "his only care was to have a spel in his purse to conjure up a good cuppe of wine with at all times."⁵² Nashe knew Greene pretty well.

The Blacke Bookes Messenger is the last number of the first group. It was licensed August 21, 1592, and was published as a substitute, or messenger, for the *Blacke Book* itself which was announced in the *Disputation*.⁵³ Greene's illness prevented his preparing the *Blacke Book*, which from his account of it in the *Disputation* was to have contained a full list of the vices and the names of all the wrong-doers in the Capital. *The Blacke Bookes Messenger* was written before Greene's fatal illness came upon him, and was sent "as a Fayring" until such time as Greene should have recovered.

In this work Greene lays open "the Life and Death of Ned Browne, one of the most notable Cutpurses, Cros-biters, and Conny-catchers, that ever lived in England." The pamphlet is in the first person and represents Ned Browne "standing in a great bay windowe with a halter about his necke ready to be hanged." Ned Browne is brazen

⁵² Nashe, Vol. I., p. 287.

⁵³ Vol. X., pp. 225, 236.

in the face of death. He tells his listeners that they need not expect to hear a repentance, for he will be resolute to the end.

We have an account of Ned's childhood and of the virtues of his parents. We are told of how he was always a disobedient son, and of how he early started on the way to villainy, disregarding the advice of his parents, blaspheming God, and following after the wickedness of the world. The pamphlet, only thirty-seven pages in all, contains five tales occupying twelve pages by which Ned illustrates the course of his life. Now he deceives a maltman, now he outwits a priest, now he kisses a gentlewoman and cuts her purse, now he lets fall a key, and lastly he tells how his wife was once cross-bitten in her own art. Between the tales Ned mentions various of his exploits, how he robbed a church, for example. Having finished his autobiography, he springs out of the window and dies. After he is buried, a company of wolves come in the night-time, tear him out of his grave, and eat him up.

Greene evidently forgets all about Ned's determination to persevere in the attitude of non-repentance which he uttered so boldly on the opening page of the book. For the cutpurse, the worst that ever lived in England, preaches a vehement and orthodox sermon just before he leaps from the window.⁵⁴ All his defiance is gone. He would have us trust not in our wits, in our strength. We are to follow the good counsel of our friends, harken to God's ministers, scoff not at the magistrates, beware of strange women, who are the Sirens which draw us on to destruction.

What a show we have! Ned Browne is only a puppet, a mechanical figure dressed up, with a halter about his neck. There he stands, totally without life, a ven-

⁵⁴ In Painter's tale, the Countess of Celant "miserably and repentantly died," and asked the people to pray for her.

triloquist's doll whose mouth is pulled open and shut by strings. When the speech is over, Ned is pitched out. But nobody cares. It was only an entertainment anyhow.

The quality of entertainment is characteristic not only of *The Blacke Bookes Messenger* but of the whole series. We have already pointed out that there is in the first three pamphlets a diminution in the amount of information to be conveyed, and an increase in the amount of illustration, so that the *Last Part* contains nothing else. The *Defence* and *The Blacke Bookes Messenger* continue in the same kind of development, both in the inclusion of tales and in the fiction of the frame-work too. "Obviously," as Professor Chandler aptly remarks, "in these pamphlets Greene was progressing from an account of rogues' tricks to the more interesting business of using rogues as anti-heroes in fiction."⁵⁵ Greene, the exposé of social vices, that is, had little to say; Greene, the teller of tales, had much. It does not follow, as one might think, that to speak of Greene's conny-catching pamphlets as the product of his tastes, and necessity for journalistic activity, is to deprive them of their importance. Indeed, so speaking of them only calls our attention to the real interest, which is not sociological but dependent upon the illustrative tales as examples of Elizabethan narrative art.

The stories are somewhat allied to the stories of the jest-books so common before and after the time of Greene.⁵⁶ This relation is especially true in connection with the emphasis upon the trick, the performance of a clever deed. But Greene's collections are different from these. They have not the unity to be found in a jest-book like the contemporary *Merrie*

⁵⁵ *The Literature of Roguery*, by F. W. Chandler. Vol. I., p. 98.

⁵⁶ See Chandler, *Literature of Roguery*, Vol. I., p. 59. Also *Cambridge History of English Literature*, Vol. III., for bibliography.

Conceited Jests of George Peele,⁵⁷ wherein we gain some definiteness of conception of the roguish hero; nor do they have the anecdotic quality of the earlier collections like the *C. Mery Talys* (1526). There is not in Greene's stories the personal element of the former, in that Greene's men and women are almost as uncharacterized as the absence of their names indicates; and yet we are made aware that the crudity, or undevelopedness, of the latter has disappeared under a method of artistic handling. We are not presented to people in whom we are interested for their own sakes. At the same time our attention is not centered wholly upon the event. I think the reason for this is the very thing that Professor Chandler speaks of, the using of rogues as anti-heroes. So that we do not have from Greene a collection of jests, but genuine fictitious narrative of such merit as to mark a step in the employment of the anti-heroic as a subject for artistic treatment.

Although Greene made some advance over the jest-book by giving the significance of a literary form to his work, he did not produce anything which should be called picaresque romance. The tales, for the most part, are complete in themselves, and have no bearing upon any of the tales before or after them. There is no conception of unity in Greene's mind, no desire to paint a roguish person. Notwithstanding the fact that there is present in many of the tales much of the subtlety in the formulation of the trick and much of the adroitness in extrication from difficult places, there is not the breadth of view nor the extensiveness of interest which characterizes the genuine picaresque. The confession of Ned Browne is no exception.

The tales, then, are individual units embedded in a framework either expository like the first two parts of conny-

⁵⁷ Entered in the Stationers' Register December 14, 1605. Works of George Peele, ed. Bullen. Vol. II.

catching and the *Defence*, or fictitious biography like that of Ned Browne. Or the tale may have no frame-work at all, like those of the *Thirde Part*. However found, each must be judged as a unit on its own basis.

There are about thirty-five of the tales scattered throughout the pamphlets. Many of them are very short, although a number run to the length of six or eight pages, or even a little more. Some are genuinely amusing, and some are very clever. One or two not in themselves humorous at all are told with such forced gusto that it is the artificial gaiety we smile at rather than the narratives. Some of them are slight, and more than one needs Greene's parting "Let each take heede of dealing with any such kinde of people," or his "Let this give them warning to beware of any such unprofitable guests" to apologize for its lack of weight and to justify its inclusion in the series. The truth is, that Greene is sometimes compelled to do his manufacturing out of scant material.

Many of the tales are good reading. The brevity of them necessitates directness and clearness. They are unified in idea and in treatment, for they are by their nature limited to the telling of one event. In style they are simple. Fortunately Greene conceived the proper language in which to write of such base subjects to be itself "base" and devoid of refinement. Of the thirty-five stories as a group, the impression one gets is that Greene has accomplished satisfactorily the end he had in mind, "Let this suffice, and now I will recreate your wits with a merry Tale or two."

Here is one of them:

"How a cunning knave got a Truncke well stuffed with linnen and certaine parcells of plate out of a Citizens house, and how the Master of the house holpe the deceiver to carry away his owne goods."

Within the Cittie of London dwelleth a worthy man who hath very great dealing in his trade, and his shop very well

frequented with Customers: had such a shrewd mischaunce of late by a Conny catcher, as may well serve for an example to others lest they have the like. A cunning villaine, that had long time haunted this Cittizens house, and gotten many a cheat which he carried away safely: made it his custome when he wanted money to helpe him selfe ever where he had sped so often: divers thinges he had which were never mist, especially such as appertained to the Citizens trade, but when any were found wanting they could not devise which way they were gone, so pollitiquely this fellow alwayes behaved him selfe: well knew he what times of greatest business this Cittizen had in his trade, and when the shop is most stored with Chapmen: then would he step up the staires (for there was and is another door to the house besides that which entreth into the shop) and what was next hand came ever away with. One time above the rest in an evening about Candlemas, when daylight shuts in about six of the clock, he watched to do some feate in the house, and seeing the mistresse goe forth with her maid, the goodman and his folkes very busie in the shop: up the staires he goes as he was wonte to doo, and lifting up the latch of the hall portall doore, saw nobody neere to trouble him: when stepping into the next chamber, where the Citizen and his wife usually lay, at the beds feete there stood a handsome truncke, wherein was very good linnen, a faire guilt salte, two silver french bowles for wine, two silver drinking pots, a stone Jugge covered with silver, and a dosen of silver spoons. This truncke he brings to the staires head, and making fast the doore againe, drawes it downe the steppes so softely as he could, for it was so bigge and heavy, as he could not easily carry it: having it out at the doore, unseene of any neighbour or anybody else, he stood struggling with it to lift it up on the stall, which by reason of the weight trobled him very much. The goodman comming forth of his shop,

to bid a customer or two far well made the fellowe afraide he should now be taken for all togither: but calling his wittes together to escape if he could, he stood gazing up at the signe belonging to the house, as though he were desirous to knowe what sign it was: which the Cittizen perceiving, came to him and asked him what he sought for? I looke for the sign of the blew bell sir, quoth the fellowe, where a gentleman having taken a chamber for this tearme time, hath sent me hether with this his Troncke of apparell: quoth the Citizen, I know no such sign in this streete, but in the next (naming it) there is such a one indeede, and there dwelleth one that letteth foorth the chambers to gentlemen. Truely sir quoth the fellowe, thats the house I should go to, I pray you sir lend me your hand but to helpe the Trunke on my back, for I thinking to ease me a while upon your stall, set it shorte, and now I can hardly get it up againe. The Citizen not knowing his owne Trunke, but indeede never thinking on any such notable deceite: helps him up with the Truncke, and so sends him away roundly with his owne goods. When the Truncke was mist, I leave to your conceits what householde greefe there was on all sides, especiallye the goodman himselfe, who remembering how hee helpt the fellow with a Truncke, perceived that heereby hee had beguyled himselfe, and loste more then in haste hee should recover againe. How this may admonish others, I leave to the judgement of the indifferent opinion, that see when honest meaning is craftilye beleagerd, as good foresight must be used to prevent such daungers."

The story is typical for it illustrates the characteristics I have enumerated above. It is short, it is clever, it is simple, and, moreover, it is interesting. I believe that its effectiveness is the result of a conscious effort. Greene wrote these tales with a long experience back of him. Starting out as the ape of Euphues when a boy of twenty, to enter the

perilous career of a man of letters in Elizabethan London, a man of his versatility and quickness would naturally develop independence and consciousness of method. This tale which I have printed in full shows such consciousness. There is careful but rapid sketching of the setting and of the conditions which make possible the event about to be related. There is just enough character drawing to show us the unsuspecting citizen and the cunning thief, and to get us ready for their respective actions when the unexpected moment of meeting arrives. There is concreteness of detail — the contents of the trunk are given, which make it so desirable a prize. The dialogue is good. There is suspense, — What will the thief do when he finds himself discovered? There is admirable climax when Mr. Goodman helps the conny-catcher on with his trunk. In its way, the piece is excellent. And it contains less than seven hundred words.

An understanding of this narrative importance of the social pamphlets of the first group associates Greene at once with the writer of fiction as we have seen him in connection with his novels. What we said of him there applies even more strongly here. Greene is at his best when he is concerned with the development of events, and when he is not encumbered with the task of presenting character. In the illustrative tales of the conny-catching pamphlets all the conditions for success for a man like Greene are inherent in the nature of the material. A rogue is pretty much a rogue anywhere. It is not his character as an individual that we are interested in; it is what his character leads him, and enables him, to do. So that Greene is left, in the writing of these tales, to follow out his own natural inclination in presenting action and clever situation rather than personality. His results are often worthy of high praise.

The pamphlets of Greene's first group are superficial as

exposures of deceits, and light in their aim. Their greatest merit is not in their sociological value, but rather in their qualities to afford entertainment. The two pamphlets of the second group⁵⁸ are differentiated from those of the first by their keener insight into certain social forces and by their greater understanding of Elizabethan society, one of them manifesting an intelligence of the element of sex as an active power toward crime, the other furnishing a knowledge of social estates at once extensive and deep.

These two pamphlets were not, it is probable, thus differentiated in Greene's own mind. Professor Collins, speaking of the significance of one of them, noted that significance as "being the more effective, as it is obviously neither intended nor perceived by the writer."⁵⁹ I believe that what Professor Collins said is true. Greene apparently did not regard these two pamphlets as unlike the *Notable Discovery* or *The Blacke Bookes Messenger*, and apparently he did not publish them for any different purpose. The "*Reade, laugh, and learne*" on the title-page of the *Disputation* would indicate as much. But although Greene was not aiming at the production of anything different and was not, it may be, aware of the greater significance of the two pamphlets, the difference does exist, as I shall try to make clear.

Of the two, the *Disputation* is the nearer to the pamphlets of the first group. We can, therefore, take it up first.

⁵⁸ A DISPUTATION Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher, whether a Theefe or a Whoore, is most hurtfull in Cousonage, to the Common-wealth. DISCOVERING THE SECRET VILLANIES of alluring Strumpets. With the Conversion of an English Courtizen, reformed this present year. 1592. Reade, laugh, and learne. Nascimur pro patria.

A QUIP FOR AN UPstart Courtier: Or, a quaint dispute betvveen Veluet breeches and Cloth-breeches. Wherein is plainly set downe the disorders in all Estates and Trades.

⁵⁹ Collins' Edition of Greene. General Introduction. Vol. I., p. 31.

This work is in two parts of about equal length, some forty pages each. The first part, from which the pamphlet derives its name, consists essentially of a dialogue between a thief and a courtesan, who happen to meet, and who, after they have conversed a few minutes on the street, go to a tavern, take a room, and order supper. While the meal is preparing, they debate their respective abilities at cozenage.⁶⁰ Nan wins, and Lawrence pays for the supper. The dialogue is interspersed with four or five tales.

There are similarities to the other pamphlets which tend to identify the *Disputation* with them. For the *Disputation* is full of references to Greene himself, advertisements of the *Blacke Booke* soon to appear, and of the Conny-catching pamphlets already published. There are the same boasts of patriotism and of bravery despite the threats which have come; there is a stirring account of how, while he was at supper one night in St. John's Head within Ludgate in the company of a certain gentleman, some "fourteene or fifteene of them met, and thought to have made that the fatal night of my overthrowe"; but the citizens came to his aid and he escaped, though the gentleman who was with him was sore hurt. There is the same pride in the effectiveness of the exposures, "I cannot deny but they beginne to waste away about London. . . . I will plague them to the extreamitie: let them doe what they dare with their bilbowe blades, I feare them not."⁶¹ Throughout the first half of the pamphlet there is, in short, such stir and noise

⁶⁰ Professor Collins was mistaken in thinking that this "dialogue is carried on in bed." Vol. I., p. 31. He mis-read Nan's remark "Lye a little further & give mee some roome," (Vol. X., p. 205) and did not perceive that Nan was only rebuking Lawrence. "What Lawrence," she went on, "your toong is too lavish." Nan's proposal "Let us to the Taverne," occurs within five lines of the remark which led Professor Collins astray.

⁶¹ Vol. X., p. 236.

and clatter, such ~~raising~~ of the dust, no wonder we are deafened and blinded. With all this palaver about us, no wonder we lose ourselves and take Greene for what he is, striving his utmost to impress upon us that he is. But in such respects as these Greene is still the quack.

In other respects, however, the *Disputation* is different from the pamphlets I have just associated it with. It is more vital. In the first place, it is genuinely humorous. The whole affair of these conny-catchers is humorous, to be sure, if regarded from the point of view I have tried to set forth. We cannot but laugh at Greene for the face he puts on. And there are humorous passages in some of the pamphlets, too. But the humor of the *Disputation* is all its own. It is not the humor evoked by the confession of Ned Browne, the laughter aroused from hearing the speech of a wooden doll, even though the wooden doll be put to death at the end with a string about its neck. It is not the knowing smile in which Greene indulges over some of the more simple tales which he thinks funny; it is not the keen appreciative delight over a cleverly turned trick; nor the sympathy we bestow upon the rascal when we know well enough that we should be sad for the victim. And it is not the flippant, saucy humor of the oft-repeated, "Was not this a pretty conny-catching, Maister R. G.?" The humor of the *Disputation* is none of these. It is deeper; grim, but not cynical. It comes partly from the situation, and partly from Greene's method of treatment. It is unconscious, unaffected. Nan and Lawrence talk naturally, never thinking for a moment that they are being overheard. Our enjoyment of their conversation is that of an eavesdropper. We have no business to be there, but we have not the will to go away. Nan and Lawrence have been so complaisant in their views of life, in the shrewdness of their wits, that we delight to see them wriggle under the sting of their

recent exposure. We rejoice in their discomfiture, and their bitterness. A primitive sort of humor, no doubt, to laugh at another's pain, but nevertheless universal, and nevertheless effective.

In the second place, Greene somehow got a hold, in this little pamphlet of his, of one of the most fundamental forces in the whole world of wrong-doing. He reveals, by the dialogue between the thief and the courtesan, the power of sex. In villainy, Lawrence is supreme. But Nan is greater than he; for most of his arts are at her command. She can nip purses with the best. She can steal, cheat, lie. She can equal him at his own trade. And then she can do more. Her strength is threefold. Evil she can do for herself; she can entice her victims to her and destroy them herself; she can demand tribute from those who would retain her favor. For hers is the allurements of the strumpet.

" . . . why the *Lawrence* what say you to me? haue I not prooued that in foysting and nipping we excell you, that there is none so great inconuenience in the Common wealth, as growes from whores, first for the corrupting of youth, infecting of age, for breeding of brawles, whereof ensues murther, in so much that the ruine of many men come from us, and the fall of many youthes of good hope, if they were not seduced by us, doe proclaime at Tyborne, that wee be the meanes of their miserie: you men theeuues touch the bodie and wealth, but we ruine the soule, and indanger that which is more pretious then the worldes treasure: you make worke onely for the gallowes, we both for the gallowes and the diuel, I and for the Surgian too, that some liues like loathsome laizers, and die with the French Marbles. Whereupon I conclude that I haue wonne the supper.

Laur. I confesse it Nan, for thou has tolde mee such wondrous villainies, as I thought neuer could haue been in

women, I meane of your profession; why you are Crocodiles when you weepe, Basilisks when you smile, Serpents when you deuise, and diuels cheefest broakers to bring the world to destruction. And so *Nan* lets sit downe to our meate and be merry."

"Vivid" and "graphic" are the words which have been applied to this dialogue.⁶² Vivid and graphic it is. But it does not stop there. It is true,— true, that is, in the largest sense. In this pamphlet we cannot quibble over details; we cannot inquire whether this statement or that has foundation in the facts of Elizabethan times, whether the picture it presents is accurate or not. We cannot judge this pamphlet as we judged the pamphlets of the first group. For this one is based upon a universal principle of truth. Whoever *Nan* and *Lawrence* may be — creations of *Greene's* own imagination — they are a man and woman at any time and in any place. Be the woman a conny-catcher, she is *Nan*; be she an Egyptian queen, she is *Cleopatra*; be she a sorceress, she is *Circe*. And the man,— he is any man who does not like *Ulysses* bind himself to the mast.

The second part of the pamphlet is, I think, of less social significance than the first. It is concerned with the story of an English courtesan who is converted from her life of sin to one of virtue. The reformation is brought about by a young man who, going with the beautiful courtesan into a very dark room, reminds her that even there God can see them. He pleads with her to change her life. She does so. Then he takes her from the house of shame and she becomes his wife. "Not a fiction, but a truth of one that yet lives," *Greene* tells us, is this wonderful "life of a *Curtszin*" whose reformation took place "this present yeare. 1592."

One need not believe, in spite of *Greene's* declaration,

⁶² *Collins*. General Introduction. Vol. I., p. 32.

that we have the account of a real person. Within this story there is a second story of similar nature, "a pleasant discourse, how a wife wanton by her husbands gentle warning, became to be a modest Matron," which, I have pointed out before, Greene took from Gascoigne's *Adventures of Master F. J.* (1573),⁶³ the story of how a man won back his faithless wife from his faithless friend by paying her as a courtesan, and by his kindly manner. Whether Greene had some similar source for the story of the English courtesan is not known. The method of the young man in taking the woman to the darkest room in the house is somewhat similar to that which the wife of the usurer's victim in the *Defence*⁶⁴ used in getting the usurer into a remote room. In that room she confined him. In this present story the young man pleads with the sinful woman. The aims of the two were different, perhaps too much so for us to say that one story influenced the other. But whether a source will ever be discovered or not, the identity of the woman and the origin of her story have no relation to the significance of her conversion. That significance is dependent upon Greene's imaginative treatment.

I have throughout this chapter looked upon Greene lightly, and I have placed little faith in his words or in his purposes. Even the dying words of Ned Browne, the cutpurse, I have regarded mostly as clap-trap. The story of the courtesan is apparently like that of Ned Browne, but in reality I believe the two are different. I cannot see that it is a mistake to perceive more sincerity in the prayer of the young man and in the woman's turning from sin than is to be found in most of Greene's work. Such passages are very few with him, in which we get genuine emotion and sincerity

⁶³ Gascoigne, Ed. W. C. Haslitt, Vol. I., p. 473. *Modern Language Notes*. Vol. 30, No. 2, p. 61.

⁶⁴ Vol. XI., p. 58.

of expression. When we do come upon one which seems to be sound, we pause suspicious. We hesitate; we fear that it may turn out mere sentimentality and that our feelings may be trifled with. The reformation of the courtesan, however, appears real. I mean not that the story of it — the manner in which it is brought about — is affecting, but that the emotion which the account of it arouses is real. Here, for one of the rare times in Greene, one may let oneself go and not feel that one is mawkish, too easily moved, unperceptive.

In the two respects that I have indicated, one in the recognition of an important sociological factor in crime, the other in the expression of a true emotion, the *Disputation* is worthy to be separated from the larger and less profound group of Greene's social pamphlets. The *Quippe for an Upstart Courtier* also has this same depth of interest.

In the *Quippe* we are no longer concerned with the conny-catchers and the harlots. In it Greene does not deal with one class only, but with some sixty professions and trades, from the knight down to the lowest and humblest workman, all of which are passed in review, commented upon, and branded as good or bad. Greene's method is as follows. One day in the Spring, he is in the fields gathering flowers. There are many people around. Suddenly they all disappear and Greene is left alone. In a few moments he sees coming toward him a pair of gorgeous velvet breeches: from the opposite direction appears a pair of plain cloth ones. These two, representing pride and lowliness, debate their right to hold the realm of Britain. They can reach no agreement. A jury is proposed, the selection of which fills the important part of the pamphlet. Finally, however, the twenty-four men are chosen, with the knight at their head. The jury debates briefly and renders its decision that cloth breeches is the older and rightful possessor of the land.

Greene got the plan and many details, sometimes verbal borrowings and paraphrases, from a poem written a number of years before. This was *The Debate between Pride and Lowliness* by one F. T.,⁶⁶ the relation between which and Greene's tract was first pointed out by Mr. J. Payne Collier in 1841. Of this poem "the most remarkable circumstance," Collier says,⁶⁶ is that Greene "stole the whole substance of it, and, putting it into prose, published it in 1592, in his own name, and as his own work." Storojenko does well to object to Collier's statement.⁶⁷ It is indeed true, as he says, that while the work is by no means entirely original Greene did much more than transform dull poetry into interesting prose. Greene took the plan and the purpose of the old debate; but he omitted and he added. He did not in any sense permit himself to be a slave to his original.

The result is that Greene's pamphlet is much better than the poem on which it is based. Instead of the eighty pages of stiff unreadable quatrains with their awkward versification and their lack of emphasis, Greene gives us sprightly prose which is as free from monotony as the method of the work would well allow. The plan, in itself, is not conducive to the production of enthusiasm. Sixty orders are to be brought into view, talked about, and gotten rid of. That is a tremendous task. And those sixty orders must be discussed with sufficient distinctness to warrant the selection of twenty-four of them to serve as a jury. There are indications that Greene realized the enormity of the undertaking and that he planned definitely to meet it. In the first place he lets the debate between velvet breeches and

⁶⁶ Formerly thought to be Francis Thynne, but shown not to be by Furnivall in his Preface to the *Animadversions of Thynne*, Chaucer Society, 1876, p. cxxviii.

⁶⁷ Shak. Soc. Pub. Vol. XVII. Introduction, p. v.

⁶⁸ Grosart's Edition of Greene's Works, Vol. I., p. 143.

cloth breeches rise to a high pitch before he proposes the settlement by jury. Then he does not tell us whether the case is to "be tried by a verdict of twelve or four and twenty." If only twelve, we think, it will not take long.

The jury is hard to select. First comes a tailor in velvet and satin, pert, as dapper as a bridegroom. Greene invites him to be of the jury.

"Not so," quoth cloth breeches, "I challenge him."

"And why?" quoth I.

Whereupon cloth breeches lays bare the vanity of tailors, their deceits and dishonesties, their catering to pride, their disregard for simplicity of fashion, and so on. Then the tailor steps aside. He will not do.

Presently comes a broker. He is refused. Then a barber, a physician, an apothecary, a lawyer. All are open to some criticism. Finally the twelfth man is accepted, a rope-maker.⁶⁸ We are relieved. One man has been chosen. But alas! the next three are refused for their villainy. We give up in despair.

Now for a stroke of luck. Three men arrive together, the knight, the esquire, the gentleman. They must be of the jury, and we have four.

Here is the best news of all. "Ther came a troope of men in apparell seeming poore honest Citizens, in all they were eight." They were content to serve. Nobody had serious objections, and so they took their places with the other four. We are quite as glad as Greene that "there were so many accepted of at once, and hoped that now quickly the jury would be ful." In a moment the thirteenth man is chosen.

Apparently things are going well. We shall soon be through. Then nine in succession are refused!

⁶⁸ This was the celebrated passage from which the Greene-Harvey-Nashe quarrel immediately arose.

Well, the jury is finally chosen. But that is not the point. What I wish to emphasize is that Greene made a conscious effort to counteract a fundamental difficulty. If he was going to succeed in presenting sixty orders in a salable pamphlet he had to do something more than enumerate; and what Greene accomplished was considerably more than enumeration. He came to the writing of the *Quippe* with a twelve years' experience as a man who had made his living with a pen. He had been obliged, as never an Englishman before him, to learn the art of successful composition, and he had come to a realization of the fact that the manner of expression counted much. Greene brings before us, then, the sixty orders; but his method is one which has interest in itself. He manages to shift our attention away from the monotony of counting off tradesmen to the more human and interesting task of being sorry for ourselves that the selection of a jury for this ridiculous quarrel should take so long.

Founded though it is upon the work of another, the *Quippe* marks the highest point in the development of Greene's prose style. Notwithstanding that the first part of the piece is not closely related to the rest of it, and that these opening pages are marked distinctly by the artificialities of Euphuism, the body of the tract is well written and thoroughly mature. It has the simplicity which characterizes the other social pamphlets; and it has also a dignity which they lack. It has humor — not so much as the *Disputation* — and clearness of outline. The sentences are firmly constructed, and contrast with the straggling ungrammatical creations of the earlier works. There is vigor and strength and stability.

In addition to the qualities which arise from the style, the *Quippe* made improvement over the *Debate* in the transformation of the abstractions of personality. The butcher, the baker, the bellows-mender, the goldsmith, the cook,—

all these, as types, belong of course to the genre of character-writing. Greene's (rather F. T.'s) idea of presenting them is, therefore, by no means new. And Greene's attitude toward these personages is not unique either, for they are in his work still representatives of a type. This is necessarily so; else they would have no place in a work of this kind — any more than the Knight or the Lady Prioress would have in the company of the immortal pilgrims if they did not personify definite social classes. But types as they are, Greene has made over the bloodless and boneless unrealities of the poem, and has given them a degree of reality. They are not abstract types, but semi-living types, if it be not a paradox to say so. They are the product, not of an expository, but of a *dramatic* mood. It cannot be maintained that Greene has secured total freedom from the method of his predecessor. But he has done much. He has secured for the types of which he writes the attention which we pay to personality rather than to a discussion of estates and conditions of life.

It is entirely in accord with Greene's nature that he should not have succeeded in endowing the people in the *Quippe* with complete individuality. Had he been Chaucer he could have done so. But Greene was not, as we saw in his fiction, able to progress to a sharp presentation of character. His talent lay in the direction of the ordering of events. The *Quippe* is another illustration of this fact. I endeavored to show how Greene made definite provision for his reader's interest in his narrative. But he did not, and could not, make the same provision in the way of character. So far as the *Quippe* is story, therefore, it is successful. So far as it is presentation of character, it is not wholly so.

Defective in the element of characterization the *Quippe* is, despite the vast amount of improvement which Greene made. But after all, I do not believe that the greatest

importance of the pamphlet attaches to its quality either as narrative or as study of character. The real significance I take to be the firmness of its grasp upon an understanding of social values.

In turning from the underworld of London Greene was broadening his view of society. He was dealing not with the problems of a particular time and place, but rather with the universal struggle between haughtiness on the one hand which leads to tyranny, and lowliness on the other which leads to the development of a substantial commonwealth and the establishment of democratic ideals.

Satires of the estates compose an established literary tradition. Greene is carrying on this tradition of the satire, of course. Perhaps he meant only satire, an exposure, in this quaint dispute and in the judgment of the classes of society who are to make up the jury, of the traits of good and bad, of uplifting and degenerating, which constitute everywhere the society of men. There is no way of knowing whether Greene meant anything else than just that.

CHAPTER V

THE POETRY

I

If we exclude the lost ballad, of which we know nothing but the title,¹ Greene's career as a poet extends over nine years, from the time of the *Second Part of Mamillia* in 1583 down until his death. In this period of time Greene ran the number of his poems up to almost ninety. His poems, with few exceptions, are lyrics; and all but one are found embedded, either incidentally or integrally, in the romances upon which he was engaged.

Greene was not unique, of course, in his mingling of prose and poetry. There were plenty of examples in the work of the Italian writers, notably of Sannazaro. His immediate predecessors in the field of English prose fiction — Painter, Fenton, Gascoigne, for instance — had employed the method. And Greene's own contemporaries were doing the same thing, men like Riche and Lodge, and above all, Sir Philip Sidney.

For the most part, Greene's poems, like those of the other writers, bear little relation to the romances in which they occur. They are inserted, often on the flimsiest possible excuse, to afford their author a means of publication for what are not infrequently experimental effusions, and

¹ Edward White: Vicesimo die Marcii (1581) Lycenced unto him under th(e) (h)andes of the Bishop of London and the wardens, A Ballad Intituled, youthe seinge all his wais so Troublesome abandoninge vertue and learninge to vyce, Recalleth his former follies with an inwarde Repentaunce By Greene. Stationers' Register, Arber Vol. II., p. 391.

what are in any event only poetical by-products which would otherwise have had no chance of circulation.

Sometimes a passage is put into poetry, and so introduced, which might just as well, as prose, have formed a part of the romance, or have been omitted altogether. How far this habit is carried can be seen in the Description of Maesia.² "She was passing fair," says Greene, "for this I remember was her description." And the poem of eighteen lines which follows is not merely incidental, but obviously dragged in. Certain poems are, however, by Greene's own statement, meant to be incidental. One of the best-known poems, his Sonetto in *Menaphon*, What thing is Love?³ is so introduced:—"Since we have talkte of Love so long, you shall give me leave to shewe my opinion of that foolish fancie thus." More frequently, though, than for any other reason, the poems, be they of ever so little importance to the development of the story, are put forward on the pretext that they are expressions of mental states of various characters. And so we have Doralicia, who "to rid hir selfe therefore from these dumpes, took hir Lute, whereupon she played thys dittie";⁴ Barmenissa, who "was overcharged with melancholy: to avoyde the which . . . she warbled out this Madrygale";⁵ Isabel, who "cald for pen and inck and wrote this mournfull Sonnet";⁶ and many another distressed heroine or repentant hero.

In many cases, to be sure, there does exist a definite, and often a necessary, connection between the poem and the novel. Occasion for Arion's discourse upon the nature of

² *Farewell to Follie*, Vol. IX., p. 266.

³ Vol. VI., p. 140. Mr. Crawford (Notes and Queries. Ser. 10. No. 9. May 2, 1908) points out that Allot in *England's Parnassus* wrongly ascribes this poem to the Earl of Oxford.

⁴ *Arbasto*, Vol. III., p. 248.

⁵ *Penelopes Web*, Vol. V., p. 179.

⁶ *Never too Late*, Vol. VIII., p. 157.

women was given by the song of Arion.⁷ Eurimachus' Madrigal was overheard by the mistress, who stepped to the lover and "drove him . . . abruptly from his passions."⁸ Under the story of the fly which would perch beside the eagle, Menaphon pleaded his love.⁹ Melicertus fell in love with Samela after he heard Doron's song in description of her.¹⁰ Mullidor sent his Madrigal to his lady, in a letter.¹¹ And lastly, Infida and Lamilia sang their courtesan's songs, deliberately to allure and retain their victims.¹²

There are numerous other poems which have this same relation to plot development. For all these the modern reader feels the justification. But on the whole, the impression of Greene's poetry, so far as its place in his romances is concerned, is that it has no particular reason for existence. The question of its intrinsic value is another matter. Whether or not it has merit, it must be considered on its own basis and not on that of its pretended relationship.

II

The themes of Greene's poems connect him with more than one poetic movement. He was in several ways the descendant of the poets who had preceded him during the last thirty years, for few indeed are the subjects employed by them which do not find a place in his work. At the same time, he was strongly affected by the newer influences which kept coming in from Italy and France, and which did much to change the character of English poetry during this period. As a result, Greene is, in this division of his work, as in

⁷ *Orpharion*, Vol. XII., p. 65.

⁸ *Alcida*, Vol. IX., p. 99.

⁹ *Menaphon*, Vol. VI., p. 59.

¹⁰ *Ib.*, p. 65.

¹¹ *Francescos Fortunes*, Vol. VIII., p. 217.

¹² *Never too Late*, Vol. VIII., p. 75.

Groatworth of Wit, Vol. XII., p. 113.

everything else that he did, a fairly accurate mirror of the literary activity of the age.

Like the other Elizabethan lyrists, Greene sang mostly of love. Love is his prevailing theme, and he treats it in various ways. "What thing is Love?" he asks. It is a power divine, a discord, a desire, a peace.¹³ Love has no law.¹⁴ Life without love is lost, just as sheep die without their food.¹⁵ Greene praises chastity¹⁶ and constancy¹⁷ in love, and he writes of lightness¹⁸ and jealousy¹⁹ in affection. Six poems preach definitely the warning to beware of love. Three have their basis in the Eros motiv. After the manner of Petrarchists, Greene deals with the pangs of the lover. At least six of his poems are on this theme. But there is in none of them that exquisite restlessness and analytic subtlety shown by Wyatt and the other poets of the early Miscellanies, and by the Sonneteers.

Greene, besides reflecting the interest of his time in the poetry of love, reflects also its interest in the pastoral development which had been strengthening for some time, and which, given decided impetus by the *Shepherd's Calendar*, first gained real importance in the decade following upon 1580.

This element of pastoralism Greene uses in several ways: whether for adornment as when Menaphon sang

"When ewes brought home with evening Sunne
Wend to their foldes,
and to their holdes,
The shepherds trudge when light of daye is done,"²⁰

¹³ *Menaphon*, Vol. VI., p. 140.

¹⁴ *Ib.*, p. 87.

¹⁵ *Never too Late*, Vol. VIII., p. 50.

¹⁶ *Philomela*, Vol. XI., pp. 123, 178.

¹⁷ *Ib.*, p. 149; also *Alcida*, Vol. IX., p. 87.

¹⁸ *Alcida*, Vol. IX., p. 87. *Orpharion*, Vol. XII., p. 21.

¹⁹ *Ciceronis Amor*, Vol. VII., p. 123.

²⁰ *Menaphon*, Vol. VI., p. 59.

in introduction to his plea for love; or whether as a medium by which to extol love's sweetness,

"If countrie loves such sweet desires do gaine,
What Lady would not love a Shepheard Swaine?"²¹

Pastoralism in Greene's poetry, however, found its chief expression in the seven poems which recount the stories of shepherds' loves. In the case of Doron's Jigge,²² the poem, to be sure, is mostly jingle, with only a few lines of narrative to make a slight story. Again when Doron and Carmela join in an eclogue,²³ the story is of slight importance. The interest in this dialogue poem centers rather upon the rustic characters themselves and upon their speech, an interest which is not in any degree changed, whether we consider the poem as a serious attempt on Greene's part to imitate country talk or as fun-poking at country manners.

"When Phillis kept sheepe along the westernne plaines," however, "and Coridon did feed his flocks hard by,"²⁴ we have as a result a poem in which the love-story is of some value. There is the conventional, but ever charming, beauty of the shepherdess which sets the shepherd's heart on fire. There is Coridon's leaving of his flocks to begin the wooing, his ineptitude in speech, and his declaration of love. There is Phyllis' coyness, and questioning, and evasion, and final consent. And so "this love begun and ended both in one." In the Shepherds Ode,²⁵ too, we have recounted the love of this same youthful couple, or of another youthful couple with the same delightfully pastoral names.

These are the stories of happy loves. The maiden is kind, and all ends well. But the event is not always

²¹ *Mourning Garment*, Vol. IX., p. 143a.

²² *Menaphon*, Vol. VI., p. 69.

²³ *Ib.*, p. 137.

²⁴ *Perimedes*, Vol. VII., p. 91.

²⁵ *Ciceronis Amor*, Vol. VII., p. 180.

thus.²⁶ Poor Tytirus "did sigh and see" . . . "where Galate his lover goes,"—Galate with the green chaplet on her head and the beautiful face, as fair as a maid's could be. But she said him nay and was off with a smile. And so was Tytirus turned to scorn the smiles and faces of woman-kind, and to,

"say to love, and women both,
What I liked, now I do loath."

Old Menalcus went even farther than disdain. He had loved, but all in vain. And so he had learned to repent, and, from his unhappy outcome, to stand as a warning to youth that it should beware of love.²⁷ One more pastoral theme Greene uses in this group of poems. I refer to the unhappy love of Rosamund and Alexis, to Rosamund's grief, lamentation, and death,—the sad result of abandonment by the faithless shepherd Alexis.²⁸

Greene has another pastoral poem, *The Description of the Shepherd and his Wife*, which may serve as a transition to the next group which we take up. This poem²⁹ is pastoral only in the sense that it deals with conventional country people. It does in reality belong to another type of poetry which Greene was fond of writing,—namely, descriptions of persons. He describes both men and women, not because an idea of their appearance is necessary in any connection, but merely because he delights to compose such descriptions for their own sake.

Aside from this description of the shepherd, there are six poems which are pure descriptions of men. The most noticeable group is that found in Greene's *Vision*, in which we have three poems obviously planned together. These

²⁶ *Mourning Garment*, Vol. IX., p. 201.

²⁷ *Never too Late*, Vol. VIII., p. 17.

²⁸ *Mourning Garment*, Vol. IX., p. 159.

²⁹ *Ib.*, p. 141.

are the descriptions of Chaucer, Gower, and Solomon,³⁰ very elaborate, with some attempt at characterization, but with more attention to outward detail of bodily appearance and garments. Another rather interesting poem on this theme is Infida's Song in *Never too Late*.³¹ Here we have a poem, written as a description of a man, which, except that it is sung by a courtesan to entice her lover, and that it contains what might easily be said to be adaptations to the sex of the singer, cannot in any way be distinguished from the conventional descriptions of women. There are the same cherry cheeks, vermilion lips, silver-white neck, and flaming eyes which fill the fond one's thoughts with "sweet desires"; there is the same appeal for mercy that may be found in any other Elizabethan song of the kind sung by a man. Indeed, we wonder whether there was any clear-cut difference as to how the descriptions should read, and whether all such descriptive poems were not made purely in accordance with a convention which would fit either men or women. We have at least seen such to be the case in Infida's Song. And besides, Solomon and the Palmer³² both had amber locks — as what Elizabethan beauty, save an occasional dark-haired maiden, had not?

Whether all poets so conventionalized their ideas of handsome men we do not have any adequate way of knowing. For outside of Marlowe's celebrated description of Leander, these descriptions of men are rare in the poetry of the age. We have observed frequently that Greene is both a mirror and an experimenter. Perhaps in these descriptions he is showing us his experimental side.

In his descriptions of women, however, Greene was by no means unique. Such poems were common enough in

³⁰ Vol. XII., pp. 209, 210, 275.

³¹ Vol. VIII., p. 75.

³² *Never too Late*, Vol. VIII., p. 13.

Elizabethan poetry, as they are in all poetry. There were beginnings of them even in *Tottel's Miscellany*. Wyatt has a reference to "tresses of gold."³³ Surrey speaks of his mistress' "golden tresses" and "smilyng lokes."³⁴ Grimald³⁵ mentions his lady's eyes, head, foot, etc., even though he does not describe them. But in the poems of the uncertain authors we find examples of elaborate description.³⁶ We find them also in Turberville³⁷—yellow hair, eyes like stars or sapphires, little mouth, coral lips, teeth white as whale-bone, body blameless, arms rightly proportioned, and hands well-shaped. And so on in the works of many of the miscellaneous lyrists.³⁸ Thomas Watson has the same sort of description in his *Passionate Century of Love*. Watson's lady, too, is of the golden-haired, blue-eyed, fair-skinned type, whose cheeks are of lilies and roses.³⁹ As Professor Erskine remarks, "the important thing about it (this method of description) is that the picture immediately became conventionalized with the Elizabethan poets, and it is the ideal of beauty for the whole period."⁴⁰

Slavishly, almost, Greene conforms to this ideal in his

³³ Arber's *Reprint*, p. 68.

³⁴ *Ib.*, p. 12.

³⁵ *Ib.*, p. 98.

³⁶ *Ib.*, p. 214; p. 270.

³⁷ Ed. Chambers, Vol. II., p. 644; p. 648.

³⁸ "If I should undertake to wryte in prayse of a gentlewoman, I would neither prayse her chrystal eye, nor her cherrie lippe, . . . For these things are *trita* and *obvia*." Gascoigne. *Notes of Instruction*, 1575. Gregory Smith, *Elizabethan Critical Essays*. 1904. Vol. I., p. 48.

³⁹ *Hecatompathia*. Spenser Society, 1869, p. 21, "This passion of love is lively expressed by the Authour, in that he lavishlie praiseth the person and beautifull ornaments of his love, one after another as they lie in order. He partly imitateth here in *Aeneas Silvius*, who setteth downe the like in describing *Lucretia* the love of *Euryalus*; and partly he followeth *Ariosto Canto 7*, where he describeth *Alcina*; and partly borroweth from some others where they describe the famous *Helen of Greece*."

⁴⁰ *The Elizabethan Lyric*. 1905. p. 91.

poems.⁴¹ His women look just alike, created, as they are, all of them thoroughly in accordance with the accepted model. But on this set convention, Greene rings all possible changes, with variations in simile and mythological adornment. Now my lady's lips are ruby red, now roses overwashed with dew; her cheeks are lilies steeped in wine, or strewn with roses red and white; or

"Lilly cheekes whereon beside
Buds of Roses shew their pride."⁴²

Her stature is like tall cedar trees,⁴³ her pace like princely Juno's, she is fairer than Diana, or Thetis, or Venus. And so on, *ad infinitum*, in the fifteen or twenty poems on this theme.⁴⁴ But her locks are always golden, and her eyes are always as sapphires or as twinkling stars. There are in Greene's work none of those somewhat rare exceptions to this blonde ideal, exceptions which eulogized dark-complexioned women, such as Sidney praises in *Astrophel and Stella*,⁴⁵ and such as reach their best-known delineation in the "dark

⁴¹ There is a passage in his prose works which indicates very clearly how fully Greene recognized this type of beauty as wholly conventional. Young men, he says, "worke their own woe, penning downe ditties, songs, sonnets, madrigals, and such like, shadowed over with the pensell of flatterie, where from the fictions of poets they fetch the type and figure of their fayned affection: first, decyphering hir beauty to bee more than superlative, comparing hir face unto Venus, hir haire unto golde, hir eyes unto starres," etc. Vol. IX., p. 292.

⁴² Vol. VIII., p. 62.

⁴³ Vol. III., p. 123. Greene had a habit of repeating himself. This description of Silvestro's Lady is used again, with some variations and omissions, as the description of Maesia in *Farewell to Follie*, Vol. IX., p. 266.

⁴⁴ An interesting example of this variation of description is to be found in the singing match (the only real example of this type of poetry in Greene) between Menaphon and Melicertus, both singers aiming to set forth the beauties of the same woman.

⁴⁵ Sonnet No. 7.

lady" of the Shakespeare *Sonnets*,—exceptions which Sir Sidney Lee maintains⁴⁶ are distinctively the reflection of French influence from men like Amadis Jamyn.

These poems in praise of women's charms, which connect Greene with the newer movements in English poetry, lead easily to another of his themes, which connects him definitely with the older school in a tradition which extends back into the Middle Ages. Greene's first extant poem belongs to this class—the satires on women. His interest in this theme, however, seems to have been slight. He has only four poems on it: one attacking particularly women's following of fashion, and their desire for fine clothes;⁴⁷ one on the curse of women's beauty;⁴⁸ one on their pride in their beauty;⁴⁹ and the last one on the censure of their "blabbing."⁵⁰ As a variation to the satires on women, there are a couple of poems against courtezans.⁵¹

Another interest which connects Greene with the past is his group of poems on gnostic themes. The gnostic poems belong to the latter half of his career, none being earlier than 1587. After this date, he wrote on various subjects, jealousy, the shortness of life, the triumph of truth, ambition, discontent, gluttony, wit, and fortune. We have seen how strongly Greene was dominated in his romances by the idea of Fortune, and so we are surprised to find only two poems on this theme—both of them on the despising of Fortune's power.

Fortune's anger was thought to strike most violently in lofty places. The lowly life was therefore considered safest; and he who was contented with his humble lot thus held the power of Fortune in despite. This theme of contentment was common enough among the Elizabethan poets. Greene

⁴⁶ *The French Renaissance in England*. 1910. p. 273.

⁴⁷ Vol. II., p. 249.

⁴⁸ Vol. IX., p. 24.

⁴⁹ Vol. IX., p. 25.

⁵⁰ *Ib.*, p. 88.

⁵¹ Vol. X., p. 200. Vol. XII., p. 129.

wrote three poems on it,⁵² among them his perhaps most celebrated song,

"Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content,
The quiet mind is better than a crown."

We pass now to another group of poems,—the Anacreontics. In 1554 there was published in France, by Henri Estienne, an edition of the poems of Anacreon, or rather of the poems thought to be his. This edition had great influence upon the poets of the Pleiade. It was almost immediately translated in full by Remy Belleau, and was to be seen thenceforth in many forms — translations, adaptations, imitations — by various of Belleau's colleagues. The Anacreontic vein, and to some extent, that of the Greek Anthology with which they were already familiar, the French poets shortly assimilated. And through the work of these men (and possibly through the original tongue as well) the Anacreontic poems became influential in England. We find Greene a sharer in this movement, nowhere more clearly than in a direct translation from the Pseudo-Anacreon itself. This is the celebrated *Number Thirty One*, which he translates as "Cupid abroad was lated in the night." This poem was one evidently which appealed to him, for he used it, with very slight changes, in two different novels.⁵³ Needless to say, after the manner of other Elizabethan poets, he nowhere indicates either the source of the poem itself or the fact that he is reproducing his own translation.⁵⁴

⁵² Vol. V., p. 179; Vol. VIII., p. 29; Vol. IX., p. 279.

⁵³ Alcida, Vol. IX., p. 99; Orpharion, Vol. XII., p. 73.

⁵⁴ Greene's translation is printed also in Davison's *Poetical Rhapsody* (Ed. Bullen, 1891. Vol. II., p. 86) where there are translations of three of Anacreon's Odes by A. W. Two of these three are translated "otherwise," the second by Thomas Spelman (or Spilman) and the third by Greene.

Of the other poems of the group, it cannot be said whether they are original with Greene or not. Perhaps he is again trying his hand at experimentation; at least no originals, either Greek or French, are known. Whether original or copied, some of these poems are in Greene's lightest style, and mark him clearly as distinct from the older poets of the Miscellanies. Mars in a rage at Venus moves against her in arms.⁵⁵ Cupid is afraid for his mother's life. She bids him be not afraid. Trimming her hair, making herself beautiful, carrying a fan of silver feathers, she goes in a coach of ebony past the place where Mars is standing. She frowns. In fear Mars throws his armor down and vows repentance. Venus becomes gracious. Thus can woman's looks subdue the greatest god in arms. All this in twenty-four lines of a degree of polish unknown before the time of Greene, and known only to a few of his contemporaries, such as Lyly, Peele, or Spenser.

In another song of Greene's we have the same delicacy of execution, but the delicacy is mingled with a suggestive sensuality which somewhat mars the poem,

". . . then though I wanton it awry,
And play the wag: from Adon this I get,
I am but young and may be wanton yet."⁵⁶

One other only of these poems need be spoken of, the song in *Ciceronis Amor*,⁵⁷ "Fond faining Poets make of Love a god," worth notice as reflecting the then prevalent poetizing about the nature of Cupid and the extent of his power. Greene says he is no god, as many foolish poets think, and proves him "but a boy not past the rod."⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Vol. VII., p. 133. ⁵⁶ Vol. VII., p. 88. ⁵⁷ Vol. VII., p. 136.

⁵⁸ A similar conception is to be found in Thomas Watson's *Tears of Fancie*, 1593. Sonnet I. "I helde him (Cupid) as a boy *not past the rod*."

Another playful disbelief in the divinity of Cupid is expressed by

There is one group of poems left, a rather large group of repentance poems. Dyce, and Grosart especially, have emphasized the repentant note in Greene's work as a characteristic of him, and have attempted to establish a canon thereby by which to judge certain works, the authorship of which has been discussed in connection with Greene's name. It is natural, perhaps, in view of the prodigal-son romances, to emphasize this side of Greene's activity. But it may be seriously doubted whether there is more than a reflection of the general tendency toward this sort of poetic theme, and whether Greene is not merely doing the thing which had begun long before his time, and which continued long after. At least many examples of repentant poems can be found among the poets of the age, some of which show a degree of real religious feeling, but more of which reveal, as Greene's most often do, only the conventional repentant ideas, sorrow for the sins of youth, and so forth.

The one of Greene's poems which really contains what has been called the "characteristic" repentant note of which Grosart spoke so often is the group of verses in the *Groatsworth of Wit*,

"Deceyving world that with alluring toys,
Hast made my life the subject of thy scorne,
O that a yeere were graunted me to live,
And for that yeare my former wit restorde,
What rules of life, what counsell would I give?
How should my sinne with sorrow be deplorede?
But I must die of every man abhorde,
Time loosely spent will not againe be woone,
My time is loosely spent, and I undone."¹⁰

Thomas Howell in his *Devises*, 1581 (Ed. Raleigh, 1906, p. 69). Howell says that Cupid is no god at all, but — a devil.

¹⁰ Vol. XII., p. 137.

These verses are seemingly autobiographical. At least they are as autobiographical as the novel in which they were printed. But whether or not they express repentance for an actual past line of conduct, they certainly do convey a considerable amount of genuine feeling from a real or an imagined experience.

The rest of Greene's repentant poems are, I think, purely conventional. In a few cases he mingles the conventional repentance with the conventional description of a woman, the beauty of the woman being the cause of the manner of life for which repentance later on is necessary. Francesco is thinking of Isabel,⁶⁰ his wife, and of how he has gone astray with Infida. His wanton eyes drew him to gaze on beauty; he saw her charms — her milk-white brow, her face like silver tainted with vermilion, her golden hair,— and these beauties entrapped him to sin. By these he slipped from virtue's path. Now despair and sorrow overcome him. "Wo worth the faults and follies of mine eie."

In the song which the country swain sings "at the return of Philador" we have a repentant poem intermingled with narrative elements. There is an elaborate description of evening⁶¹ and of old Menalcus who sits mourning. He is bewailing his past. He had fed sheep, secure from Fortune's ire. Then he had become ambitious and had gone to the city, where he followed in evil ways. In conclusion he has repented of his wickedness, and has come back to the country to sing,

" . . . therefore farewell the follies of my youth." ⁶²

⁶⁰ Vol. VIII., p. 92.

⁶¹ There are several other instances of elaborate settings. In *Never too Late* (Vol. VIII., p. 50) the scene is a riverside, there are flowers. It is April. A lady enters, sits down, and begins to speak. In the same novel (p. 68) a poem opens with Nature quiet, the sky clear, the air still, the birds singing. In *Philomela* (Vol. XI., p. 133) the time is winter, there are frosts, and leafless trees. A shepherd is sighing.

⁶² In the *Paradise of Daintie Devises* (Ed. Brydges and Haslewood,

In *Francescos Fortunes* occurs ⁶³ a series of repentant stanzas. There is a stanza for each sign of the zodiac, dealing with the season (and often with country life), and ending with the statement that the seasons will call repentance to mind. The lines are written on the wall as a "testament" to serve Francesco as a remembrancer of his follies, and, in spite of their monotony of style, have a dignity and effectiveness of movement which one would not expect in a poem of this kind.

Another repentant poem is the dialogue between the grasshopper and the ant,⁶⁴ entirely along the lines of the fable,—the spendthrift and repentant grasshopper, and the frugal, inhospitable, unforgiving ant. Greene is like the grasshopper. Too late he has realized that night, and that winter, would come.

There remains a final group of three or four miscellaneous poems which cannot be classed with any of the groups spoken of above. One of these is an Epitaph⁶⁵ on the heroine of a romance, one an oracle,⁶⁶ one a hermit's exordium,⁶⁷—a curious poem on the power of the Bible to overcome Satan. The last one is among the best-known of Greene's poems, Sephestia's Lullaby, the

"Weepe not my wanton smile upon my knee,
When thou art olde thers grieve inough for thee."

Lullabies are comparatively rare in Elizabethan poetry, so rare that one does not expect to find an example, so exquisite an example, among the poems of Greene.

The British Bibliographer, Vol. III., p. 97), M. Hunnis has a poem with a similar refrain,

"Good Lord with mercie doe forgive the follies of my youth,"
merely an illustration of a common theme and a common phraseology.

⁶³ Vol. VIII., p. 223.

⁶⁴ Vol. XII., p. 146.

⁶⁵ Vol. IV., p. 284.

⁶⁶ Vol. VI., p. 34.

⁶⁷ Vol. VII., p. 29.

All the poems so far spoken of were written in connection with the romances. We turn now to the one poem from Greene's pen which was not so written, *A Maiden's Dreame*,⁶⁸ printed in 1591, "upon the Death of the right Honorable Sir Christopher Hatton Knight, late Lord Chancellor of England,"⁶⁹ who died on November twentieth of that year. It is an example of the dream, or vision, poetry so common in our earlier literature. A maiden falls asleep and dreams. She seems to be near a spring, about which are sundry goddesses. A knight lies there dead, clad all in armor. Over the body of the knight each of the goddesses utters her complaint,—Justice, Prudence, Fortitude, Temperance, Bountie, Hospitalitie, Religion. All these grieve bitterly. More than anything else it is their uncontrolled passion which mars the poem. The oft-repetitions of the ending of each complaint,

"At this her sighes and sorrowes were so sore:
And so she wept that she could speak no more,"

become, far from effective, after a while even ridiculous.

There is another poem not found in a novel which has been associated with Greene's name. This is *A Most Rare and Excellent Dreame, Learnedly Set Downe by a Woorthy Gentleman, a Brave Schollar, and M. of Artes in Both Universities*, printed in the *Phoenix Nest*, 1593.⁷⁰ As Mr. Child suggests,⁷¹ this may be the work of Greene. We know that

⁶⁸ Vol. XIV., p. 301.

⁶⁹ "This poem had long disappeared, and was not known to be in existence till 1845, when it was discovered by Mr. James P. Reardon, who sent a transcript of it to the Council of the Shakespeare Society, among whose papers it was printed (Vol. II., pp. 127-45)." Collins, Introduction to *A Maidens Dreame. Plays and Poems of Robert Greene*. 1905. Vol. II., p. 219.

⁷⁰ Collier's Reprint, p. 45.

⁷¹ *Cambridge History of English Literature*, Vol. IV., p. 135.

certain papers of Greene's were in the hands of printers after his death in the previous year. The "M. of Artes in Both Universities" sounds like Greene, surely. And there is nothing in the poem which is contrary to Greene's genius. Still there were other "Masters of Artes in Both Universities," there were other poets who wrote poems of the type of the *Excellent Dreame*. There was so much that was conventional in poems of the kind, and there is so little in this poem — except its rather unusual length — to distinguish it from a hundred other poems on the same theme, that I do not believe that we can say definitely either that it is or that it is not the work of Greene.

The poem opens with an extended discussion on the cause of dreams, after the mediæval manner. Then follows the visit of a lady to her sleeping lover. The lover (in the first person) describes her beauties and tells of his restless and hopeless state. The lady and he discuss the subject of love at some length. She is firm in her denials, and he faints away in a swoon. Thereupon she, fearing that he is dead, relents; and the lover comes back to life and the waking state.

We may now summarize briefly. Throughout, we have seen in Greene a mirror of the poetical interests of the time. It is true that there are many of its phases which are not represented in his work. He has not the vaunt of immortality which so obsessed the poets of the Pleiade, and which came to be characteristic of the English sonneteers of the following decade. There are many themes at which he does not try his hand. He has no poems which are plays on words, no epistles between personages of classical history, no songs to Spring, no wedding songs, no poems in praise of virginity, or on the theme of "try before you trust," no tributes to deceased friends, no epitaphs. These and other themes find no representative in Greene's volumes. But in

spite of these omissions, Greene's poetry does to a very considerable degree coincide with the main currents of endeavor. We have noted his love poems, with their variations of theme, his pastoralism, his descriptions of people, his satires on women, his gnomic verse, his Anacreontic, and repentant, poems. All of these together identify him with the past, the present, and the future of his time. Sometimes in his choice of themes he is continuing a tradition which comes down from the Middle Ages, sometimes he is pushing his way forward in experimentation. Most often he is simply doing what he sees others doing,— a follower of fashion.

III 7

Greene is typical of the period, both in his use of metres already developed and in his love of making experiments in verse forms. Most of the poetical measures attracted his attention. These he sometimes employed just as he found them at hand. Often, however, he employed them as the bases of experimentation which, more frequently than in any other way, took on the shape of new combinations of old forms.

Greene's favorite metre, and it was the favorite metre of most of the poets who wrote between the time of the decay of the poulter's measure and that of the revival of the sonnet, was the six-line iambic pentameter stanza riming *ababcc*. About twenty-five of his poems, or more than a hundred stanzas, have this structure. He uses it, without discrimination as to theme, for all conceivable subjects: love songs, songs of contentment, Anacreontics, pastorals, repentances, or gnomic verses. More often than not, the metre is used in its ordinary, simple form.

This six-line stanza is also used in other ways. In several poems the concluding couplet of the stanza takes on the

nature of a refrain and is used in the same form, or in an appropriate variant form as the individual stanza may require, throughout the poem. In one case,⁷² the sixth line only is so used. In the Song of Arion,⁷³ there are three stanzas of this form, plus a concluding stanza of two heroic couplets. Lamilia's Song in the *Groatsworth of Wit*⁷⁴ consists of two stanzas. The first four lines of each are in conformity to the type, but the couplet at the end, very slightly in the nature of a refrain, is of hexameters instead of the regular pentameters. The poem is made somewhat more elaborate, too, by the use of a light-tripping refrain, thrice used,— before the first stanza, after the second, and between the two. This refrain is a quatrain, *abab*, *a* being feminine, and each foot consisting of an iambic and an anapestic:

“Fie, fie on blind fancie,
It hinders youths joy:
Fayre Virgins learne by me,
To count love a toy.”

Finally in the fable of the grasshopper and the ant,⁷⁵ we have three stanzas of this metre, intermingled with quatrains and prose.

The *ababcc* stanza was in use in both pentameter and tetrameter forms. Greene nowhere uses the tetrameter form in its strict application. But he does write a variant tetrameter stanza⁷⁶ in which the first and third lines do not rime, as one expects, so that we have the scheme, *xbybcc*.

Greene's next most important metre is the tetrameter couplet. This metre he uses in fifteen poems, and in doing so is following a fashion by no means so common as that of

⁷² *Francescos Roundelay*, Vol., VIII p. 92.

⁷³ Vol. XII., p. 65.

⁷⁴ Vol. XII., p. 113.

⁷⁵ Vol. XII., p. 147.

⁷⁶ Vol. III., p. 180; Vol. IV., p. 264.

the stanza just spoken of. The use of the form itself was comparatively rare before Greene's time, and the employment of trochaics in that form was even rarer. In fact the use of any foot but the iambic was unusual.⁷⁷ Tusser, to be sure, regularly used the tetrameter couplet in anapests, sometimes combining seven such couplets to make a "sonnet."⁷⁸ But Tusser's work is sporadic rather than typical. In the *Paradise of Dayntie Devises* the tetrameter couplet is used,⁷⁹ but here it is in iambics. And the tetrameter couplet was used to a considerable extent by Turberville.⁸⁰ In Turberville, however, as in the older poets where the form is occasionally found, the foot is almost invariably iambic. It is not until we come to the work of Greene and Nicholas Breton that we find the trochee a staple element in verse construction, — thenceforth common enough, in the seven syllable, or truncated four-accent line, with many a later song writer. Indeed it may perhaps be said that this couplet, in the poetry of Greene, Breton, Shakespeare, Barnfield, Browne, and Wither, supplanted the *ababcc* form just as that itself had taken the place of the poulter's measure and the fourteenner as the popular verse form.

Professor Schelling thinks it reasonable to regard the English trochaic measures "not so much as attempts to follow a foreign metrical system, as a continuance of the original freedom of English verse as to the distribution of

⁷⁷ Gascoigne: — "Note you that commonly now a dayes in English rimes (for I dare not call them English verses) we use none other order but a foote of two sillables, wherof the first is depressed or made short, and the second is elevate or made long; and that sound or scanning continueth throughout the verse." *Certaine Notes of Instruction. Elizabethan Critical Essays*. Ed. Gregory Smith, 1904. Vol. 1., p. 50.

⁷⁸ *British Bibliographer*, ed. Brydges and Haslewood, Vol. III., p. 20.

⁷⁹ *Ib.* The perfect tryall of a faythfull freend. Yloop.

⁸⁰ Ed. Chambers, Vol. II.

syllables.”⁸¹ And he proceeds to state that “most English trochaics show a tendency to revert back to the more usual iambic system by the addition of an initial unaccented syllable.” In illustration of the tendency, he cites Greene’s Ode,⁸² a poem of thirty-six lines, of which ten are, as he says, iambic, the rest trochaic. In this particular case, the illustration bears out the statement.⁸³ But unless we expand with an unusual looseness the meaning of the word *tendency* I cannot believe that the statement of Professor Schelling is of great significance, so far as Greene is concerned. To be sure, several of his poems are about evenly divided as to iambic and trochaic feet. On the other hand, we must acknowledge that Greene’s feeling for trochees is pretty well developed when we find him writing a poem of thirty-eight lines⁸⁴ of which practically one hundred per cent are in strict conformity to rule, and when we find ten other poems in which the per cent of trochees is equal to ninety or above.

The next in importance of Greene’s metres is his blank verse. He has ten poems in this metre, about 225 lines. It cannot be said that he used blank verse to any great advantage (I am not referring to the dramas at all), or that he had any conception of its possibilities. He very seldom ends a thought elsewhere than at the end of a line, and he makes nothing of the cæsura as an element of artistic construction. His blank verse has more of the qualities of the heroic couplet than of blank verse proper, except that it does not rime. Very often indeed, he intermingles heroic

⁸¹ *Elizabethan Lyrics*, ed. Schelling, 1895. Introduction, p. xl.

⁸² Vol. XI., p. 123.

⁸³ An even better illustration might have been the poem (Vol. IX., p. 201) of eighty-eight lines in which twenty-five per cent only are trochaic; or the description of Chaucer (Vol. XII., p. 209) of which only one-fifth is in this measure.

⁸⁴ Vol. VIII., p. 13.

couplets in his blank verse; and nearly all of his blank verse poems have one or more couplets at the end.

Like his trochaic tetrameter couplet, Greene's blank verse is of some interest in the history of English prosody. The use of blank verse in *Tottel's Miscellany*, by Surrey and Grimald, has often been spoken of, as has the blank verse of Gascoigne's *Steel Glas* (1576).⁸⁵ But outside of these instances and of the drama, blank verse was very rare in the sixteenth century. It was especially rare in the use to which Greene put it. As a matter of fact, blank verse lyrics are so seldom to be met with in the history of English poetry in any of its periods as to make even the rather insignificant ones of Greene worth a casual mention.

Nine of Greene's poems are in quatrains. Five of these are iambic pentameter, riming *abab*. One of these *abab* quatrains⁸⁶ is a little irregular in having after each two lines a short line of five or six syllables. Three poems are in iambic pentameter quatrains, but these rime *abba*. One other poem⁸⁷ is not really a quatrain at all, being merely fourteeners printed as broken lines, as was the custom of the day.⁸⁸

Of the heroic couplet there is very little use in Greene's poetry. He has but one poem in that kind of couplets, and it is very short — only six lines.⁸⁹ We have seen,

⁸⁵ One might perhaps mention the blank verse of Spenser's earlier translation of the *Visions of Bellay* (Grosart, Vol. III., p. 231). These Spenser later rewrote.

⁸⁶ Vol. VI., p. 65.

⁸⁷ Vol. III., p. 248.

⁸⁸ The absence from Greene's poetry of fourteeners, with this one exception, and of the poulter's measure altogether, is interesting as showing to what extent these metres had decreased in popularity as lyric forms. From being the almost universal measures of the sixties and seventies, they have become by Greene's time almost archaic.

⁸⁹ Vol. X., p. 200.

however, that Greene almost always used pentameter couplets in connection with his blank verse.

Various other metres were used by Greene at different times. These may be dismissed somewhat briefly; before we come to the elaborate stanzas which he was so fond of using. One of these metres is the rime royal, in which Greene's longest poem is written.⁹⁰ Another use to which Greene put the rime royal is the combination of two such stanzas to make what he called a "sonnet."⁹¹ It is hard to say whether Greene meant these to be sonnets or not. The fact, however, that in the short poems the stanzas of rime royal always occur in groups of two or four may, even though the stanzas are printed separated, indicate that Greene had in his mind a poem to consist of fourteen lines or a multiple of fourteen lines, no matter of what those fourteen lines might consist.

Of the sonnet proper Greene makes practically no use. In view of the excessive amount of sonneteering which had already begun before his death this absence is interesting. There are only three real sonnets, — if a sonnet may be defined as merely a one-stanza poem of fourteen lines, — and no two of these are alike. One of them follows⁹² the rime scheme *abbaaccadeedff*, with the division in thought into the octave and sestet, but not into the smaller divisions of quatrain and triplet. Another⁹³ consists of three *abba* quatrains (all different) with a concluding couplet. Still a third⁹⁴ — if it be Greene's — is of the regular Shakesperian type.

⁹⁰ *A Maidens Dreame*. Whether or not the *Rare and Excelent Dreame* of the *Phoenix Nest* is Greene's, it also is in rime royal.

⁹¹ For example, Vol. XI., p. 142; Vol. XII., p. 137.

⁹² Vol. XII., p. 129.

⁹³ Vol. VIII., p. 169.

⁹⁴ Collins' ed. Vol. II., p. 248. None of the earlier editions of *Menaphon* contain this poem entitled, "Dorastus (in Love-passion) writes these lines in Praise of his loving and best-beloved Fawnia." Although Collins and Dyce reprint it from editions of the late seven-

Ten-line sonnets were not uncommon during the period; Greene has two of them,—Shakesperian sonnets with one of the quatrains left out. One of these ten-line sonnets forms the second stanza of the third poem just mentioned above.

The ottava rima has one example, the repentance poem spoken of above, which devotes a stanza to each of the signs of the zodiac. Another poem⁹⁵ seems to consist of two ten-stress couplets with lines divided to make eight five-stress lines, plus two five-stress couplets, twelve lines in all. The last of these isolated metres is in Menaphon's Song to Pesana.⁹⁶ Here we have a poem of twelve lines of which the simplest analysis seems to be that it consists of iambic pentameter couplets, each line followed (thus breaking up the couplet) by a short line of five or six syllables, and the short lines also riming. Thus:

U	-		U	-		U	-		U	-		U	-		<i>a</i>
						U	-		U	-		U			<i>b</i>
U	-		U	-		U	-		U	-		U	-		<i>a</i>
						U	-		U	-		U			<i>b</i>

In the experiments with classical metres Greene took little part. He attempted a couple of poems⁹⁷ in Latin, one in the Sapphic, and one in the elegiac, measure. But with neither of these, nor with any other stanzaic measure did he work in English. His sole experimentation was confined to the writing of English hexameters. In the four poems which he wrote in this measure,⁹⁸ Greene in no way

teenth century, it seems reasonable at least to retain some doubt as to its authenticity.

⁹⁵ Vol. III., p. 125.

⁹⁶ Vol. VI., p. 105.

⁹⁷ Vol. VII., p. 125; *ib.*, p. 145.

⁹⁸ Vol. II., p. 219; Vol. IX., p. 151; *ib.*, p. 159; *ib.*, p. 293.

followed the laws of Roman verse construction. Instead he preserved the customary English accents, and made them coincide with the metrical stress.

It is not surprising to find that the classical metres made small appeal to Greene whose real poetic ability lay in fanciful and sentimental songs in short-lined, and, we shall soon see, in capriciously elaborate measures. With a talent of such a nature he would have felt himself bound down by the restrictions of the Latin models, and so it is true that "he could never have cultivated the classic metres with any considerable result."⁹⁹ .

In two of his poems Greene revives an old-time custom of intermingling French and English. One of these poems¹⁰⁰ consists of nine stanzas, each of two lines of English and four lines of French,—the French portion being the same in all the stanzas.

Sweet Adon', darst not glaunce thine eye,
N'oserez vous, mon bel amy?
 Upon thy Venus that must die,
Je vous en prie, pitie me:
N'oserez vous, mon bel, mon bel,
N'oserez vous, mon bel amy?

Greene's second poem of this kind is one of seventeen lines divided into three parts.¹⁰¹ These parts are all extremely irregular, and contain, between them all, six lines of French.

We now come to the numerous elaborated stanzas which Greene employed. These may perhaps be best taken up singly in the order in which they occur in the novels. The first of these, and one of the most complicated stanzas not

⁹⁹ S. L. Wolff, *Englische Studien*, Vol. 37, p. 334.

¹⁰⁰ Mr. Alfred Noyes has a poem in this same stanza form, ("Our Lady of the Sea." *Oxford Book of Victorian Verse*, p. 935) except that his stanza consists of eight lines, the additional number being caused by the insertion of two lines just before the last two lines of French.

¹⁰¹ Vol. VIII., p. 217.

only in Greene's work but in the whole period, is in Menaphon's Song.¹⁰² The poem is one of two stanzas of fourteen lines each. This stanza Professor Erskine¹⁰³ resolves into the equivalent of Sidney's ten-line epigrammatic form, which is the Shakespearian sonnet minus one quatrain, by saying that it is composed "of two quatrains in tetrapodies, followed by a pentapody couplet"; and that, of the stanza thus resolved into ten lines, the first, third, fifth, and seventh lines "are broken by a syncopated foot at the second accent." The explanation seems even more complicated than the stanza. Perhaps it would be better to take the stanza just as it is, and simply say that it consists of a group of four triplets and one couplet. Each triplet consists of two truncated two-stress trochaic feet plus a third line of iambic tetrameter. The rime of the short lines is uniform throughout; the longer lines rime in pairs, the first two going together, and the last two. The couplet at the end is heroic and has still a third rime. The scheme is thus *aab aab aac aac dd*.

Lodge in his *Rosalynde*, 1590, in Montanus' Sonnet, imitates this stanza of Greene's. He omits, however, the concluding couplet, his two-stress lines do not all end in the same word — most frequently they do not rime at all, — and the long lines rime in alternation. In Tarlton's *News out of Purgatory*, issued anonymously in 1590, we have another variation of Greene's stanza. Whether this¹⁰⁴ poem is, or is not, meant to be a parody on Lodge's poem, as Mr. Bullen suggests,¹⁰⁵ is not of interest here, but the metre as

¹⁰² Vol. VI., p. 41.

¹⁰³ *The Elizabethan Lyric*, p. 238.

¹⁰⁴ *Ronsards Description of his Mistris, which he Weres in his Hands in Purgatory*.

¹⁰⁵ *Lyrics from the Dramatists of the Elizabethan Age*. Ed. Bullen. 1901, p. 287.

worked out in that poem deserves notice. The stanza there is reduced to eight lines, two triplets and an iambic tetrameter (instead of pentameter) concluding couplet. The short lines of the triplets do not rime, the long ones do.

The second of Greene's elaborate stanzas is to be seen in Sephestia's Song to her Child.¹⁰⁶ This is a stanza of eight lines riming in couplets, the fourth couplet ending in the same word and employing nearly the same phraseology in all three stanzas. The couplets are truncated trochaic tetrameter, and a certain syncopated effect is produced by the frequent, but irregular, omission of the unaccented syllable in the second trochee. The song has a refrain, used, as Elizabethan refrains almost always are, before the first, after the last, and between all of the middle stanzas. This refrain is a couplet of four-stress lines made up of ten syllables, and is interesting both for the use of the dactyls and the lightness of movement produced by the six unaccented syllables. Thus:

"Weepe not my wanton smile upon thy knee,
When thou art olde thers grieve inough for thee."

In Menaphon's Roundelay¹⁰⁷ we again have a stanza of ten lines. It seems to consist of two quatrains plus a concluding heroic couplet. Of these quatrains, the first rimes *abba*, and has the first and fourth in five-stress, and the second and third in two-stress. The second quatrain rimes *cdcd*, having the second and fourth in five-stress, and the first and third in two-stress. The measure throughout is iambic, except for an occasional trochee at the beginning of a line.

The complicated six-line stanza used in Doron's Jigge¹⁰⁸ consists of a tetrapody iambic couplet, the two lines of which are separated by a couplet of two-stress dactylic lines; the

¹⁰⁶ Vol. VI., p. 43.

¹⁰⁷ Vol. VI., p. 59.

¹⁰⁸ Vol. VI., p. 69.

whole is followed by a two-stress anapestic couplet. The rime scheme is thus *abbacc*, and the rime *bb* occurs in all the stanzas. Greene calls this song a roundelay; rightly so, in as much as a roundelay is a "light poem, originally a shepherd's dance, in which an idea or phrase is repeated, often as a verse, or stanzaic refrain."¹⁰⁹

Another variety of six-line stanza is that consisting fundamentally of an *abab* iambic pentameter quatrain followed by two iambic trimeter lines, unrimed. There are four stanzas, and the trimeter lines after the first quatrain rime with those after the second quatrain in *cdd* fashion. Those after the third quatrain rime with the lines after the fourth.

A curious stanza¹¹⁰ is that made up of nine lines and riming *abc abc ddb*. All the lines are iambic pentameter except *dd* which are dimeter.

On three different occasions¹¹¹ Greene made use of an eight-line stanza. This stanza consists of four pentameter lines with the second and fourth riming, but with the first and third unrimed. Following these four lines are two one-stress iambic lines unrimed. The stanza is completed by a heroic couplet.

Radagon's Sonnet in *Francescos Fortunes*¹¹² consists of ten-line stanzas. The stanzas are made up of two iambic pentapody quatrains each followed by an iambic dimeter line. All the dimeter lines have the same rime. The two quatrains of each stanza exchange rimes, the first being *abba*, the second being *baab*.

One of the most elaborately complicated metres is an eight-line stanza consisting of one-, two- and five-stress lines, all of which are iambic. The first, third, fifth, and

¹⁰⁹ Schelling, *Elizabethan Lyrics*. Introduction, p. liii.

¹¹⁰ Vol. VIII., p. 157.

¹¹¹ Vol. VIII., p. 175; Vol. IX., p. 214; Vol. XII., p. 242.

¹¹² Vol. VIII., p. 200.

eighth are pentameter; the second and fourth are dimeter; and the sixth and seventh are one-stress. The first two pentameters rime with each other; and the last two. The dimeters rime with each other; the one-stress lines have no rime, either with themselves or with anything else in the stanza.

The last of Greene's elaborate metres¹¹³ is one of six lines. It consists of two tetrapody couplets (about half trochaic, half iambic) with a dimeter trochaic couplet between them.

This tendency toward the elaborate stanza, which we have been discussing at perhaps tedious length, was a late development in Greene's career. The lyrics in the earlier romances are simple in form, being for the most part in the *ababcc* stanza, in blank verse, or in quatrain. In *Menaphon* and *Francescos Fortunes* (1589 and 1590), however, his fancy for experiment ran wild, and he produced multitudinous effects with long and short lines, and combinations of long and short lines, employing in the process all varieties, and combinations of varieties, of poetic feet.

This keen interest in experimentation which Greene manifests is a very striking characteristic of his time. All the poets show this interest, Breton, Sidney, Lodge. But in no one of them, Sidney perhaps excepted, is there greater fertility in the production of new and unique effects.

IV

Greene's poetry is best appreciated when it is recollected in tranquillity. Under such conditions that portion which has no especial interest drops out of mind; and the memory, thus rid of its impedimenta, not only retains with vividness

¹¹³ Vol. VIII., p. 212.

certain individual poems, but creates for itself a unity of impression which arises from the contemplation of the *ensemble*. Not all poets demand this remoteness, for what the reader gets from them is something immediate which comes directly from contact with their works. But with a man like Greene, it is better to remove oneself to a little distance in order to obtain from him the pleasure which it is his to give.

There is no message in Greene's poems, no criticism of life, no truth and high seriousness. Greene as a poet is not great any more than he is great as a dramatist or as a writer of romance. But he is, when he is at his best, graceful and charming. There is an atmosphere about some of his poems, a fragrance which lingers and becomes the more fragrant from being remembered.

Greene is not a personal singer. Except as no artist can fail to manifest somewhat of his individuality, these songs are not an expression of Greene himself. They are largely conventional,—poetical exercises rather than an outpouring of lyric emotion. The origin of them is in an impulse of art rather than of feeling. It is not a song of himself that Greene sings, nor is he giving the record of any emotional experience. Not for this reason, then, can we cherish his poems.

The quality which pervades the poetry is the same as that which gives the charm to *Menaphon*. Greene's was a sensitive nature. It took over much of sentiment and of the manner of expression from the whole movement of the Renaissance; it caught the spirit of that age so full at once of activity and of romantic thought. All of these it used; but it idealized them. It imparted a spirit of freshness and refinement, an elevation which was at the same time beautiful and idyllic. So it was in the poetry. Greene sang because others were singing and he sang much the

same things. But he did it with a sweetness of voice and a delicacy of understanding, whether he piped his songs in Arcadia, or trilled and carolled the pangs of love, or executed graceful turns of melody. Always, in those poems which we remember, there is charm.

I shall not attempt here to make a representative selection from Greene. The poems we choose are not always representative. Here and there, we take from out a poet's work a little phrase, a line, a stanza, or refrain, often isolated — somewhat meaningless even, as it stands alone. But we remember it. And we wrap up in it very often the whole significance of that poet's life. It has, like Browning's star, opened its soul to us and therefore we love it.

THE SHEPHERDS WIVES SONG

Ah what is love? It is a pretty thing,
As sweet unto a shepherd as a king,
And sweeter too:
For kings have cares that waite upon a Crowne,
And cares can make the sweetest love to frowne:
Ah then, ah then,
If countrie loves such sweet desires do gaine,
What Lady would not love a Shepherd Swaine?

His flockes are foulded, he comes home at night,
As merry as a king in his delight,
And merrier too:
For kings bethinke them what the state require,
Where Shepherds carelesse Carroll by the fire.
Ah then, ah then,
If countrie loves such sweet desires gaine
What Lady would not love a Shepherd Swaine.

MAESIA'S SONG

Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content,
 the quiet mind is richer than a crowne,
 Sweet are the nights in carelesse slumber spent,
 the poore estate scorne fortunes angrie frowne,
 Such sweet content, such minds, such sleep, such blis
 beggers injoy when Princes oft do mis.

The homely house that harbors quiet rest,
 the cottage that affoords no pride nor care,
 The meane that grees with Countrie musick best,
 the sweet consort of mirth and musicks fare,
 Obscured life sets downe a type of blis,
 a minde content both crowne and kingdome is.

PHILOMELAS ODE

Sitting by a River's side,
 Where a silent streame did glide,
 Muse I did of many things,
 That the mind in quiet brings. . . .

LAMILIAS SONG

Fie, fie on blind fancie,
 It hinders youths joy:
 Fayre Virgins learne by me,
 To count love a toy.

SONNET

Cupid abroad was lated in the night,
 His winges were wet with ranging in the raine,
 Harbour he sought, to mee hee tooke his flight,
 To dry his plumes I heard the boy complaine.

I opte the doore, and graunted his desire,
I rose my selfe and made the wagge a fire.

Looking more narrow by the fiers flame,
I spied his quiver hanging by his back:
Doubting the boy might my misfortune frame,
I would have gone for feare of further wrack.
But what I drad, did mee poore wretch betide:
For forth he drew an arrow from his side.

He pierst the quick, and I began to start,
A pleasing wound but that it was too hie,
His shaft procurde a sharpe yet sugred smart,
Away he flewe, for why his wings were dry.
But left the arrow sticking in my breast:
That sore I greevde I welcomd such a guest.

INFIDAS SONG

Sweet Adon', darst not glaunce thine eye.
N'oserez vous, mon bel amy?
Upon thy Venus that must die,
Je vous en prie, pitie me:
N'oserez vous, mon bel, mon bel,
N'oserez vous, mon bel amy?

SEPHESTIAS SONG TO HER CHILDE

Weepe not my wanton smile upon my knee,
When thou art olde ther's griefe inough for thee.
Mothers wagge, pretie boy,
Fathers sorrow, fathers joy.
When thy father first did see
Such a boy by him and mee,

He was glad, I was woe,
 Fortune changde made him so,
 When he left his pretie boy,
 Last his sorrowe first his joy.
 Weepe not my wanton smile upon my knee:
 When thou arte olde ther's grieve inough for thee.

PHILOMELAE'S SECOND OADE

Fields were bare, and trees unclad,
 Flowers withered, byrdes were sad:
 When I saw a shepherd fold,
 Sheepe in Coate to shunne the cold:
 Himselfe sitting on the grasse,
 That with frost withered was:
 Sighing deepely, thus gan say,
 Love is folly when astray: . . .
 Thence growes jarres thus I find
 Love is folly, if unkind;
 Yet doe men most desire
 To be heated with this fire:
 Whose flame is so pleasing hot,
 That they burne, yet feele it not: . . .
 Here he pauséd and did stay,
 Sighed and rose and went away.

DORONS JIGGE

. . . I gan to woo
 This sweete little one,
 This bonny pretie one.
 I wooed hard a day or two,
 Till she bad:
 Be not sad,

Wooe no more I am thine owne,
 Thy dearest little one,
 Thy truest pretie one:
 Thus was faith and firme love showne,
 As behooves
 Shepheards loves.

MENAPHONS SONG

Some say Love
 Foolish Love
 Doth rule and governe all the Gods,
 I say Love,
 Inconstant Love
 Sets mens senses farre at ods.
 Some sweare Love
 Smooth'd face Love
 Is sweetest sweete that men can have:
 I say Love,
 Sower Love
 Makes vertue yeeld as beauties slave.
 A bitter sweete, a follie worst of all
 That forceth wisdom to be follies thrall.

DORONS ECOLOGUE JOYND WITH CARMELAS

Carmela

Ah Doron, ah my heart, thou art as white,
 As is my mothers Calfe or brinded Cow,
 Thine eyes are like the glow-worms in the night,
 Thine haire resemble thickest of the snow.

Doron

Carmela deare, even as the golden ball
That Venus got, such are thy goodly eyes,
When cherries juice is jumbled therewithall,
Thy breath is like the steeme of apple pies.

Thy lippes resemble two Cowcumbers faire,
Thy teeth like to the tuskes of fattest swine,
Thy speach is like the thunder in the aire:
Would God thy toes, thy lippes and all were mine.

Carmela

I thanke you Doron, and will thinke on you,
I love you Doron, and will winke on you.
I seale your charter pattent with my thummes,
Come kisse and part for feare my mother comes.

The reader familiar with Elizabethan poetry will recognize much that is conventional. He will perceive readily that Greene is the child of his time. They were all a family of poets,—Greene, Breton, Lodge, Barnfield. Shakespeare was only a more gifted brother. But such a reader, or one who is not so aware of Greene's likeness to his fellows, cannot fail to see the delicacy with which these poems are executed.

We have here only eleven of the ninety, it is true, and not all of those—a selection in miniature. It contains, nevertheless, the best of Greene as a poet, and small as it is, it makes up the most pleasing part of his works. Greene is often insincere; he is interested in literature for what it yields him. These lyrics he wrote because they were the fashion. But of songs imbedded in a romance or tale of any sort we do not expect much. We judge them for their

beauty, and are satisfied if they give us pretty sentiment or musical verses. We come to them disinterestedly. Perhaps we do not quite, with Carlyle, make our claim a zero and get infinity for our quotient. But when we get pleasure, the pleasure is gain.

The selection reveals, too, a phase of Greene as a man. It shows the more tender, graceful side of his nature. There is nothing garish about it. Greene's taste in discrimination between the fanciful and the ultra-fanciful was not always sure. His fondness for fine clothes and his manner of wearing his beard are characteristics which appear in his writings. There is manifested a feeling for the artistic; at the same time, there is no limit before which to stop. If he is writing a romance, he has it romantic to excess; a didactic pamphlet, he forces ideas upon us at every turn. In his poetry, taken altogether, the same defect is present. But with the poetry — something which is impossible with the prose works — we can cut away the parts which are bad, and leave that which is good discernible and clear. Reduced thus to minute compass, sublimated, what is either dull or fantastic in the mass becomes pure and undefiled. It can be recognized as the product of a genuinely artistic imagination.

Greene has not the honor of a place in the *Golden Treasury*.

CHAPTER VI

CHRONOLOGY OF GREENE'S NON-DRAMATIC WORKS

For most of Greene's works a statement of the date is an easy matter. In connection with a few of them there are difficult problems.

The first novel which we have from Greene's pen is *Mamillia, a Mirrour or looking-glasse for the Ladies of Englande*. This work is by "Robert Greene, Graduate in Cambridge," and it was "Imprinted at London for Thomas Woodcocke, 1583." Of this 1583 edition, one of two things must be true. Either it was not the first edition, or the work was delayed in publication. That it was written earlier is clear from an entry in the Stationers' Register (Arber, II., 378) as follows:

3rd October, 1580.

Thomas Woodcock: Lycenced unto him "*Manilia*," a looking glasse for ye ladies of England.

If the year 1580 saw an edition, all copies have been lost. On the other hand, there is no satisfactory explanation for the three years' delay of publication, especially when we remember that it was licensed in 1580 to the very man for whom it was printed in 1583.

Mamillia: the second part of the triumph of Pallas offers a similar problem. It is dated "From my Studie in Clarehall the vij of Iulie," presumably in 1583. Two months later it was entered on the Register (II., p. 428):

6 September, 1583.

Master Ponsonbye: Licenced to him under Master Watkins hande a booke entituled "*Mamilia, The seconde parte of the tryumphe of Pallas* wherein with perpetuall fame the constancie of gentlewomen is Canonized."

The title-page declares it to be "by Robert Greene, Maister of Arts, in Cambridge," and to have been printed at London by "Th. C. for William Ponsonbie." The date, surprisingly, is 1593. We have here a difference of ten years, a difference as strangely unaccountable as that of the *First Part*, for the *Second Part*, too, was both licensed by, and printed for, the same man. Various theories have been propounded, among them those of Bernhardi,¹ as an explanation of these facts; but the wisest course seems to be that of saying merely that there is no explanation.

Of the *Myrrour of Modestie* there is nothing to state except that there was apparently only one edition, that "Imprinted at London by Roger Warde" 1584, and that there is no entry of the pamphlet in the Stationers' Register.

The year 1584 saw the production of four other works. The first of these was *Greenes Carde of Fancie*. Of this work the earliest known edition is that of 1587. I think there can be no doubt, however, that the pamphlet published in 1587 by Ponsonby is to be identified with that entered by him on April 11, 1584, that "yt is granted unto him that if he gett the *card of phantasie* lawfullie allowed unto him, that then he shall enioye yt as his own copie."

As regards *Arbasto*, in spite of the fact that Grosart found in the S. R. no early notice of it, the pamphlet was, nevertheless, entered therein on the thirteenth of August, 1584.² It was published that same year by Jackson, and it is the first of Greene's works to bear on its title-page his celebrated motto, "Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci."

¹ Robert Greenes *Leben und Schriften. Eine historisch-kritische Studie*. Leipzig. 1874.

² Hugh Jackson: Received of him for printinge a booke intituled *Arbasto the Anatomie of fortune* . . . vj d.

Concerning *Morando, the Tritameron of Love*, there is some doubt as to the date of its first appearance. There is an entry in the S. R. by Edward White for August 8, 1586; but this entry, it is more than likely, refers to an edition in two parts (the only edition of which we have any knowledge) by the same publisher in 1587. Grosart (Vol. III., p. 44) mentions a "Part 1st, of 1584, in the Bodleian," and it is probable that there was such an edition. For as Storojenko (Gros. Vol. I., p. 75) points out, the Earl of Arundel, to whom the work is dedicated, "was committed to the Tower for high treason in the following year"³ and he remained in the Tower for the rest of his life. It is not likely that Greene would have dedicated a pamphlet to him after that event.

One work only dates from 1585. This is the *Planetomachia*: or the first parte of the generall opposition of the seven Planets. It was imprinted for Thomas Cadman.

After 1585 we have no new work of Greene until 1587. But for June 11 of that year, the S. R. has an entry:

Edward Aggas: Received of him for Grene his farewell to follie . . . vj d.

No copy of an edition of 1587 has come down to us. The earliest that we have is of the edition of 1591, printed by Thomas Scarlet, and giving as Greene's title, "Utriusque Academiae in Artibus magister." Now there is no reason for believing that an edition of 1587 was ever made. That it was written then in some form or other, is possibly true.⁴

³ April 25, 1585. See D. N. B. for Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel. Arundel had become a Catholic in September of the preceding year.

⁴ The fact that the *Farewell to Follie* is, as we have seen (p. 23) related definitely to that large group of didactic and quasi-didactic frame-work tales which were so abundant in Greene's work about 1587, and the fact that it, of all of Greene's work, shows the largest amount

It is also true that it may have been published later in the form in which it was originally written. There is no way of knowing about that. But, it is evident that the prefatory addresses at least, as we now have them, were not written before the end of 1590. The statement, "I presented you alate with my mourning garment"⁵ fixes November 2, 1590, as the earliest date, for that was the date on which the *Mourning Garment* was licensed.⁶

Of the *Farewell to Follie*, Edward Aggas either was, or was to have been, the publisher. He actually was the publisher of *Penelopes Web* which was prepared about this time and which may, of course, as Simpson suggests,⁷ have been substituted for the *Farewell to Follie*. *Penelopes Web* was licensed June 26, 1587, and was printed that year. Three months later, on September 18, *Euphues his Censure to Philautus* was licensed to Edward White, and this book too was published in 1587.

On March 29, 1588, there was allowed unto this same publisher, Edward White, the pamphlet "intytuled *Perymedes the black smith*"; and on December 9, *Alcida Greenes Metamorphosis* was entered by John Wolf. Whether for Edward White is not known, for the earliest edition we possess is that printed by George Purslowe in 1617.⁸ Sometime between

of borrowing from Primaudaye's *Academy* (translated 1586) may put probability upon the year 1587, as the date of composition.

⁵ Vol. IX., p. 230.

⁶ References to Tomliuclin (Tamberlaine [?] pub. 1590) and to Martin Marprelate are taken by Simpson (*School of Shakespeare*, Vol. II., p. 349) as further evidence that 1591 is the date of the first edition.

⁷ *School of Shakespeare*. Vol. II., p. 350.

⁸ There can be no doubt that there was an earlier edition than that of 1617. The piece is mentioned among Greene's most popular works by R. B. the author of "Greene his funeralles" which was licensed to John Danter February 1, 1594. I fail to see any force to Storonenko's argument that the book was not published at once after Decem-

March 29 and December 9, 1588, it is most likely that *Pandosto* should be placed. This celebrated pamphlet was printed by Thomas Orwin for Thomas Cadman in 1588. There is no entry of *Pandosto* in the S. R.

On February 1, of the next year, was licensed the *Spanish Masquerado*, the first of Greene's extant works which was not a novel. It was reprinted the same year.

Thomas Orwin also printed, this time for Sampson Clarke, *Menaphon*, of which the entry in the S. R. was made August 23, 1589. During this same year *Ciceronis Amor* also was printed,⁹ although there was no entry of it in the S. R.

The earliest novel of 1590 is *Orpharion*, which was licensed on January 9.¹⁰ This work must have been planned and possibly written nearly a year before the date of licensing,¹¹ for Greene mentions it in his preface to *Perymedes*, March 29, 1588, when he speaks of "*Orpharion*, which I promise to make you merry with the next tearme." In the preface to the *Orpharion* itself he apologizes for the long delay, when he says, "I have long promised my *Orpharion* . . . at last it is leapt into the Stacioners Shoppe, but not from my Study . . . the Printer had it long since: marry whether his presse were out of tune, Paper deere, or some other secret delay drive it off, it hath line this twelve months in the suds." The earliest edition of which we have an example is that of 1599.

On April 15, the *Royal Exchange* was licensed. This work contained "sundry aphorisms of Phylosophie," and was "Fyrst written in Italian and dedicated to the Signorie of ber 9, 1588. Storojenko argues that it must have been published after Nashe's *Anatomie of Absurditie*, else, *Alcida* being against women, Nashe could not have spoken of Greene as the "Homer of Women." (Gros. Vol. I., p. 95.)

⁹ For Thomas Newman and John Winington.

¹⁰ Not licensed in 1589 as Grosart (Vol. XII., p. 3) thought.

¹¹ Licensed by Edward White.

Venice, nowe translated into English and offered to the Cittie of London." The author of *La Burza Reale* is unknown.

With regard to the other works of 1590, the situation is complicated. The only date that we can fix is that of the licensing of Greene's *Mourning Garment* on November 2, 1590. That two other novels belong to this same year, is shown by their title-pages; the *Never too Late* and the *Francescos Fortunes: or the second part of Greenes never too late*. But it is not certain to what part of the year to assign them, for there are no entries in the S. R. There is a complication, too, which arises from the uncertainty of the date of Greene's *Vision*, which may, or more likely may not, belong to this same year.

The title-page of the *Vision* (which was undoubtedly one of the many papers which Chettle, in *Kind-harts Dream*, tells us were left in booksellers' hands) states that it was "Written at the instant of his death." Thomas Newman, the publisher, in his dedicatory address tells us that "it was one of the last works of a wel known Author," and assures us that although "manie have published repentaunces under his name," yet there are "none more unfeigned than this, being euerie word his owne: his own phrase, his own method." Greene's address to the Gentlemen Readers is, I think, clearly a genuine statement from his own pen, and may, it seems to me, be considered as having been among the latest of Greene's writings. There is no reason, that I can see, for the doubt expressed by Mr. Collins as to this fact;¹² nor for not thinking that the *Vision* was prepared for publication

¹² "It would be interesting to be able to determine whether the Address to the Gentlemen Readers was written, as it may have been, by himself at the instant of his death, or whether it was written in 1590 under the stress of a severe illness when he thought himself on the point of death, or whether, finally, it was a forgery of the publisher." (Collins, Vol. I., General Introduction, p. 26, note 2.)

very shortly before Greene's death in an attempt to relieve if possible the dire poverty of those last days.

The saying, however, that the work was prepared for publication late in August, 1592, is not saying that it was necessarily written then. Indeed, I am inclined to believe that it was not written then. The style is much less direct than that of the ending of the *Groatworth of Wit* and of the *Repentance*. Moreover, the pamphlet seems rather to be a frame-work tale for the two stories by "Chaucer" and by "Gower" than to partake of the nature of the other repentance pamphlets. Neither do the three poems which the work contains resemble the poems of the more serious novels. And so it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that it may have been written at any time between a date a few months subsequent to the date of the events to which it relates (the publication of the *Cobbler of Canterbury* in 1590 and the subsequent repentance for folly on Greene's part) and the time of Greene's last illness. That it may have been written as a frame-work tale and at the last moment made over into a repentant pamphlet is not an altogether impossible supposition.

The *Vision* is of considerable importance in determining the order of the three novels, besides *Orpharion*, which date definitely from 1590, for it contains a reference to two of them: "Only this (father Gower) I must end my *nunquam sera est*, and for that I craue pardon: . . . looke as speedily as the presse will serue for my mourning garment."¹³ Mr. Collins, on the basis of these references, places the composition of the *Vision* in the midst of the composition of the other two. As I have said, I do not see how all of it at least can be put there. "After I was burdened with the penning of the *Cobbler of Canterbury*" does not sound like a statement immediately following the publication of that las-

¹³ Vol. XII., p. 274.

civious pamphlet. And there is another consideration against the *Vision's* having been written just then. The events described in the *Vision* undoubtedly occurred in 1590. But never in 1590, nor until much later, was Greene personal in his writings. We think of him as having talked a great deal about himself, and the death-bed pamphlets are those we usually read first. But we must remember that by 1590 Greene had really said very little, and that it was not until August, 1592, that he wrote of himself personally — in the *Groatworth of Wit* and in the *Repentance*. We can hardly, therefore, place the *Vision* as early as 1590. This dating does not in any way conflict with the references to the *Never too Late* and the *Mourning Garment*. Greene in the *Vision* was looking back upon events as they occurred, and from that point of view did have those books still to finish.

To come back now to the other novels. Greene evidently was writing the *Never too Late* when the events described in the *Vision* occurred, for he asked Father Gower for permission to finish it before he took up the *Mourning Garment*. At the end of the *Never too Late*, however, Greene promises us a sequel: "As soone as may bee Gentlemen, looke for Francescos further fortunes, and after that my Farewell to Follie, and then adieu to all amorous Pamphlets."¹⁴ The *Francescos Fortunes* soon followed, which with more show of protestation than of sincerity, perhaps, Greene says would not have gone to press "had it not been promised."¹⁵ And then, before preparing the *Farewell to Follie* which had been promised at the end of *Never too Late*, Greene turned to write the *Mourning Garment* to which he makes reference in the *Vision*, and which he speaks of in the preface to the *Farewell to Follie*.¹⁶

¹⁴ Vol. VIII., p. 109.

¹⁵ Vol. VIII., p. 118.

¹⁶ Vol. IX., p. 230.

So much then for the novels of 1590, with *Orpharion* first on January 9, and *Mourning Garment* last, on November 2. Between these two dates come *Never too Late* and *Francescos Fortunes*. As for the *Vision*, it may belong anywhere from the latter half of 1590 on to 1592.

In 1591 the *Farewell to Follie* was the only novel published. This pamphlet we have already discussed.

On December 6, 1591, Greene published *A Maidens Dreame*, his only extant poem which is not part of a work of fiction.

One week later, December 13, were entered the first of the conny-catching pamphlets:

Edward White and Thomas Nelson: Entred . . . *The arte of Connye katching*.

William Wright: Entred for his copie to be printed always for him by John Wolf *The second parte of Connye katching*.

The Thirde and last Part was entered February 7, 1592, by Thomas Scarlet, for Cutberd Burbie. *The Defence of Conny-Catching* was licensed April 21. *A Disputation Betweene a Hee and a Shee Conny-Catcher* dates from about this time, a little later perhaps.

Philomela was licensed July 1, 1592. Greene says it was written earlier.¹⁷ From its dissimilarity to the realistic pamphlets among which it appears, and from its striking likeness to some of the earlier work, the romance may be, no doubt, placed, as Dr. Wolff says,¹⁸ with the 1584-7 group or with the *Pandosto-Menaphon* group of 1588-9. It is rather characteristic of Greene that in addition to his apology for publishing a love pamphlet after the promises made in the *Mourning Garment* and the *Farewell to Follie*, he should change his motto from the *Omne tulit*, which he used on

¹⁷ ". . . which I had written long since & kept charily." Vol. XI, p. 109.

¹⁸ *Greek Romances*, p. 405.

similar romances, to the *Sero sed serio* of the prodigal-son romances. On July 20, *A Quippe for an Upstart Courtier* appeared. *The Blacke Books Messenger*, or the *Life and Death of Ned Browne*, was entered August 21.

The last novel from Greene's pen is the *Groatsworth of Wit*. When this was started there is no way of knowing. But the last part of it, surely, was written during Greene's last days when the seriousness of his illness was making itself felt. It was not published until after his death, having been licensed on September 20, 1592. The earliest known edition is that of 1596.

The last date we have to mention is October 6, when the *Repentance* appeared.

CHAPTER VII

THE PLAYS

(A) THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE PLAYS

THERE is no doubt that *The Comical History of Alphonsus, King of Arragon*,¹ is the earliest play that has come to us from Greene's pen. Upon this fact scholars are agreed. In addition to the crudity of the play in regard to general style and mechanism, which show immaturity, there are Greene's own lines in the Prologue,

"And this my hand, which used for to pen
The praise of love and Cupid's peerless power,
Will now begin to treat of bloody Mars,
Of doughty deeds and valiant victories,"²

¹ The earliest exemplar "as it hath been sundrie times acted" was printed by Thomas Creede, 1599; this is the only one of Greene's plays which has no motto.

² This passage in Greene's prologue may be a challenge to Marlowe, or it may be an imitation of Marlowe's prologue to *Tamburlaine*:

"From jiggling veins of rhyming mother wits,
And such conceits as clownage keeps in play,
We'll lead you to the stately tent of war."

Passages like Marlowe's and Greene's may, however, both be just following a fashion. Such passages were at least not unknown in poetry. In *England's Helicon* (Ed. Bullen, p. 240) there is "An Heroical Poem" which contains these lines:

"My wanton Muse that whilom wont to sing
Fair beauty's praise and Venus' sweet delight,
Of late had changed the tenor of her string
To higher tunes than serve for Cupid's fight.
Shrill trumpet's sound, sharp swords, and lances strong,
War, blood, and death were matter of her song."

which have been taken to mean that in *Alphonsus* Greene turned from novels to plays, inspired to do so, it is further agreed, by the success of *Tamburlaine*.

But though *Alphonsus* is recognized as his earliest dramatic production, the date at which Greene began to write plays has been a matter of discussion. Especially so, since the appearance of the edition of Greene's plays³ by the late Mr. Churton Collins, who argued for a much later date than any hitherto proposed.⁴

Granting the relation between *Alphonsus* and *Tamburlaine* as that of copy and model, Mr. Collins, nevertheless, places *Alphonsus* as not earlier than 1591. Most important among his reasons for this date is the similarity between the prologue to *Alphonsus* and certain passages in Spenser's *Complaints* (published 1591). In *The Teares of the Muses*, Spenser, through the mouth of Calliope, deploras the decay of poetry and the want of heroic themes. The Muse threatens eternal silence. *Alphonsus* as a hero satisfies Calliope, according to Greene's prologue, and she determines to break her silence. Greene's play is, therefore, a response to Spenser's *Complaints*. Certain parallels of

In the heroical poems of Daniel and Drayton there are indications of this same kind of ostentatious introduction.

Recognition of the prevalence of such passages as that of Greene's, while it casts a little doubt upon Greene's challenge to Marlowe, does not alter the relation between the two plays; nor does it in any way lessen the probability that *Alphonsus* is Greene's first play.

³ *The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene*, Ed. with Introductions and Notes, by J. Churton Collins. Clarendon Press, 1905.

⁴ The whole matter, it may be said, is very difficult. The problem of the dates — and the authorship, too — of Greene's plays is perhaps unsolvable, and it is to be doubted whether anything more definite than approximations can be reached. To the discussions of dates and authorship I have little to add. What I say, largely by way of summary, may be found in the writing of Gayley, Greg, Storojenko, and Collins.

thought and diction bear out this same conclusion. Additional reasons Mr. Collins finds as follows: In none of his works before 1591 does Greene mention his plays, although he mentions his novels; Nashe says nothing of Greene's plays in the Preface to *Menaphon* (1589); nor do the commendatory verses to *Menaphon* (1589), to *Perymedes* (1588), to *Alcida* (1588), have any such references. The possible objection that, since *Tamburlaine* was produced as early as 1587, 1591 would be a rather late date at which to be parodying it, is answered by the statement that *Tamburlaine* had continued to be popular upon the stage and that additional prominence had been given to it by its publication in 1590.

Such are, briefly, Mr. Collins' reasons for his choosing 1591 as the date of *Alphonsus*. Mr. W. W. Greg, reviewing Collins' work,⁵ attacked the theory. Mr. Greg says that the question turns "upon the interpretation of an important but obscure passage in the *Preface to Perymedes*", dated 1588:

"I keepe my old course, to palter up some thing in Prose, using mine old poesie still, *Omne tulit punctum*, although lately two Gentlemen Poets made two mad men of Rome beate it out of their paper bucklers: & had it in derision, for that I could not make my verses jet it upon the stage in tragicall buskins, everie worde filling the mouth like the faburden of Bo-Bell, daring God out of heaven with that Atheist *Tamburlan*, or blaspheming with the mad preest of the sonne."⁶

The full meaning of Greene's words cannot be known, but two interpretations may be given to the passage as a whole. One is to the effect that Greene is taunted for not having written plays; the other, to the effect that he has done so and failed. Collins, arguing for a late date for *Alphonsus*, believes the latter to be the more sensible interpretation. Greg agrees.⁷ But he would place *Alphonsus* immediately

⁵ Modern Language Review, Vol. I.

⁶ Vol. VII., p. 8.

⁷ This is the interpretation given by Mr. Gayley also. (*Representative English Comedies*. Vol. I., p. 403.)

after *Tamburlaine*, not later than 1588. As for the similarities to Spenser, Mr. Greg considers them of little worth. "Supposing the parallels to have the least force, which it is difficult to grant, nothing follows, since, as Professor Collins himself admits, the poems in question circulated in MS. for several years before they issued from the press."⁸

In addition to his refutation of Collins' statements, Greg brings forward another argument for the year 1587. It is this. Delphrigus and the King of the Fairies are mentioned as famous parts by the player who in *Groatsworth of Wit* induced Roberto to become a maker of plays. The detail in *Groatsworth of Wit* is, Mr. Greg thinks, a personal recollection, and indicates that these plays were popular when Greene began to write plays. Now Nashe, in the Preface to *Menaphon* speaks of the "company of taffety fools" who "might have antickt it untill this time up and downe the countrey with the King of Fairies, and dined every day at the pease porredge ordinary with Delphrigus." The plays, that is, were old in 1589. Hence Greg concludes, in 1587 — immediately after the success of *Tamburlaine* — Greene wrote his *Alphonsus*.

On account of the closeness of the relationship between *Alphonsus* and Marlowe's play, 1587 or 1588 has been accepted by Fleay, Storojenko, Dickinson, Gayley, and Greg. Against the belief of these men, the argument of Professor Collins for a later date seems unconvincing.

Greene's second play, it is almost generally believed, was *A Looking Glasse for London and Englande*. This play Gayley assigns to 1587. Storojenko and Grosart place it late in 1588 or early in 1589. Collins puts it in 1590 or 1591, as a part of Greene's "repentant" work. The statement of Collins, in view of what has been said in an earlier chapter regarding Greene's repentance, need not detain us

⁸ Mod. Lang. Rev. Vol. I., p. 244.

here. As for the others, they agree that 1589 may be safely considered as the latest possible date, on account of a passage at the end of Lodge's *Scillaes Metamorphosis*,

"To write no more of that whence shame doth grow,
Or tie my pen to penny-knaves delight,
But live with fame and so for fame to write."⁹

I can see no particular force to the argument. In the first place, inasmuch as the lines occur at the end of a poem and not of a play, I cannot see that Lodge is referring to plays particularly and not to all kinds of writing for penny-knaves' delight. In the second place Lodge is not to be taken too seriously. His statement is nothing more than the conventional apology for the "trifle" therewith presented.¹⁰ As for 1589, however, it is likely that the *Looking Glasse* was written before that date.

About 1588 Lodge sailed with Captain Clarke to Tercera and the Canaries. He wrote some commendatory verses for Greene's *Spanish Masquerado* (licensed February 1, 1589), and published his own *Scillaes Metamorphosis* on September 22. He and Greene may have collaborated during the summer, after Lodge's return. But Gayley's point is well taken that, since the play contains no reference to the Armada (and such a play might very naturally contain such references), Lodge and Greene produced it before Lodge left England in 1588. It does not seem necessary, however, to put the date as early as Gayley does, — June, 1587, the time when Spain and the Pope joined forces in a treaty.

The *Looking Glasse* was printed for Thomas Creede in 1594, having been entered on the Stationers' Registers on March 5 of that year. This play is mentioned in Henslowe's Diary

⁹ Lodge's works, Hunterian Club. Mr. Gosse inclines to place this poem as early as 1585 or 1586.

¹⁰ Similar to the utterances of Gascoigne and of Greene himself.

among the performances of 1592: March 8, March 27, April 19, and June 7.

The earliest impression of *Orlando Furioso*, "as it was playd before the Queenes Maiestie," was published in 1594, having been entered on December 7, 1593. The Queen's players left the court on December 26, 1591. The play must have been written before that date. *Orlando* was already an old play when it was performed in Henslowe's theater by the Admiral's and Lord Strange's men on February 21, 1592. If there is any truth in the passage in the *Defence of Conny-Catching*, "you sold Orland Fourioso to the Queens players for twenty nobles, and when they were in the country, sold the same play to Lord Admirals men, for as much more," it would indicate that the play had been resold early in 1592, and that it had belonged to the Queen's company until December 26, 1591.

It is very likely that December 26, 1591, marks the latest date for composition. A passage within the play¹¹ sets July 30, 1588, as the earliest. This passage, as Prof. Gayley says,¹² is historically minute, referring to the departure of the Armada from Lisbon; it does not "savour of afterthought or actor's clap-trap," and it agrees with a later passage in the play which has to do with Orlando's defense of Angelica (lines 1485-6),

"Yet for I see my Princesse is abuse,
By new-come straglers from a forren coast."

That the play was written after the defeat of the Armada seems clear.

¹¹ Lines 82-85: Scene I.

"And what I dare, let say the Portingale,
And Spaniard tell, who, mann'd with mighty fleets,
Came to subdue my islands to their kings,
Filling our seas with stately argosies."

¹² *Rep. Eng. Com.* p. 408.

Between July 30, 1588, and December 28, 1591, the Queen's company acted at court ten times.¹³ The performance of February 9, 1589 (being assigned also to the Admiral's men), is open to question, which leaves December 26, 1588, as the only date within the year that followed the Spanish defeat. This is a probable date for the performance, for references to the Armada would be likely to occur in a play to be performed at court at such a time. There may be further ground for thinking that *Orlando* was acted before the spring of 1589 in that Peele may be alluding to *Orlando* in his *Farewell*,¹⁴ written that year.

The Honorable Historie of frier Bacon and frier Bongay, according to Gayley,¹⁵ dates from the end of 1589 or the beginning of 1590, sometime within a year after the production of *Dr. Faustus*. The play is the first entered in Henslowe's *Diary*, under the date February 19, 1592. It was not then a new play.

The play of *Faire Em* is of considerable importance in the problem of dating *Friar Bacon*. *Faire Em* is obviously imitation of Greene's play. Greene reproaches its author¹⁶ for having consumed "a whole yeare" in the process of writing. Whatever "a whole yeare" may mean, *Friar Bacon* precedes *Faire Em* by several months at least.

Professor Gayley dates *Faire Em* 1590. It very likely followed the fresh editions of Yver's *Printemps d'Iver* (the source) in 1588 and '89. It was written between November 2,

¹³ 1588, Dec. 26; 1589, Feb. 9 (?), Dec. 26; 1590, Mar. 1, Dec. 26; 1591, Jan. 1, 3, 6, Feb. 14, Dec. 26. (Fleay, *Hist. of Stage*, pp. 76-80.)

¹⁴ See Collier, *Memoirs of Alleyn*; Fleay, *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 96; Gayley, *Rep. Eng. Comedies*, p. 409.

¹⁵ *Rep. Eng. Comedies*, p. 411.

¹⁶ O, tis a jollie matter when a man hath a familiar stile and can endite a whole yeare and never be beholding to art? but to bring Scripture to prove anything he says — is no small piece of cunning." (Vol. IX., p. 233.)

1590, and the middle of 1591,— between the preface to Greene's *Mourning Garment*, which has only general references to those who may reject his repentance, and the preface to *Farewell to Follie*, which contains the specific reference to the author of *Faire Em*. A year preceding would place *Friar Bacon* in the second half of 1589 or very early in 1590.

Mr. Fleay¹⁷ brings forward another argument to indicate 1589 as the date of *Friar Bacon*. Inasmuch as playwrights using dates in their plays always, Mr. Fleay says, used the almanac of the current year; and inasmuch as 1589 is the only possible year which fulfils these conditions, the earliest possible date is thus determined.

Collins, it should be said, believes that *Friar Bacon* followed, rather than preceded *Faire Em*, believing that Greene's play is an imitation of the anonymous one. He assigns it, therefore, to the end of 1591 or the beginning of 1592.

The last of Greene's undoubted plays is *James IV*. This play was entered on the Stationers' Registers on May 14, 1594, but no copy earlier than that of 1598 is known. As to the date of its composition, Mr. Collins has nothing to say, further than that it is among Greene's latest dramatic work.

It is probable that *James IV*. dates from the end of 1590 or the beginning of 1591, following upon the line of development started in *Friar Bacon*. Mr. Gayley makes considerable of what he thinks is a definite relationship between Dorothea's song in *James IV*. (Act I., lines 270-9) and some lines in Peele's *Hunting of Cupid*, which he dates as 1590. In the resemblance of Dorothea's song to Greene's lines and in the further resemblance to Greene's own song in *Mourning Garment* (November 2, 1590) I can see no argument

¹⁷ In Ward's O. E. D., cxliii-cxliv.

of weight. "Ah, what is love?" was too common a theme to make reasoning upon its occurrence at all stable. There seems to be more foundation to Gayley's statements that the boast of Dorothea,

"Shall never Frenchman say an English maid
Of threats of forraine force will be afraid,"

contains a reference to Elizabeth's landing of troops in France in 1590 and 1591; and that the reference to the Irish wars may have come from the contemporary troubles in Fermanagh. On the whole, the conclusion that the play was presented at court on December 26, 1590, is not bad.

The conclusions stated above are by no means certain. Long years ago Dyce prophesied that it would be impossible to determine with exactness the date of any one of Greene's plays. Since Dyce's time, not enough definite information has been secured to prevent the fulfilment of the prophecy. To date *Alphonsus* 1587 or 1588; *Looking Glasse* the same years (more likely, 1588); *Orlando* 1588, December 26; *Friar Bacon*, 1589 or 1590; *James IV.*, 1590, December 26, — is to come as near the truth, however, as, at present, is possible.

(B) ATTRIBUTIONS TO GREENE

Aside from the problems of dates, the student of Greene's plays is confronted by the further problem of determinations of authorship. With this problem, as with the other, I shall endeavor to state briefly what arguments have been advanced.

Of the numerous plays which have at times been assigned to Greene it is necessary to mention the following: *First and Second Parts of Henry VI.*, *The Pinner of Wakefield*, *Selimus*, and *A Knack to Know a Knave*. With regard to

the Henry VI. plays the long-standing attribution of a share to Greene by Miss Lee¹⁸ has been argued to be without foundation by the author of a recent discussion of the Henry VI. problem.¹⁹ *A Knack to Know a Knave* has been proposed by Professor Gayley,²⁰ following a suggestion of Simpson, as a solution for the puzzling passage in Greene's *Groatsworth of Wit*. Greene, writing to Marlowe, says, "With thee I joyne young Juvenall, that byting satirist, that lastly with mee together writ a comedie." The identification of "young Juvenall" and of the "Comedie" has caused much discussion, into the merits of which it is not necessary to enter.²¹

Opposed to the theory favoring Lodge and the *Looking Glasse*, Professor Gayley believes that Nashe and a *Knack to Know a Knave* better fit the problem. With the exception of Collins, who somewhat arbitrarily favors Lodge, opinion has come to rest largely upon Nashe. But Gayley is alone in his proposed solution of the "comedie" in which Greene says he had a share. His argument is that the subject is not foreign to Nashe, that certain characters resemble two others in *Summer's Last Will*, that Greene had been engaged

¹⁸ Miss Jane Lee. *The New Shakespeare Society Transactions*. 1875-6, p. 219. "On the Authorship of the Second and Third Parts of Henry VI. and their Originals."

¹⁹ C. F. Tucker Brooke. "The Authorship of 2 and 3 Henry VI." The main points to Mr. Brooke's discussion are as follows:

1. The approach of the subject from the side of Shakespeare cannot yield results.
2. Marlowe is the author of the *Contention* and the *True Tragedy*.
3. Neither Greene nor Peele had any connection with the plays.
4. Shakespeare revised *Contention* and *True Tragedy*, deepening the characters and changing many passages and lines.

²⁰ *Rep. Eng. Comedies*. Vol. I., pp. 422-6.

²¹ A good summary may be found in McKerrow's Edition of Nashe.

in knave pamphlets, that it has certain parallels to *Friar Bacon*, that it is called a "comédie" while no authenticated play of Greene's is so called, that its date is in accord with Greene's statement, and that it was played by a company then acting three of Greene's known dramas. All these points are suggestive, even though not conclusive.

The remaining two, *Selimus* and *George-a-Greene*, have more importance in this question of authorship. Dr. Grosart first "reclaimed" *Selimus* for Greene and included it among Greene's plays. This he did on the basis of external and internal evidence. The external evidence consists in the fact that two passages from *Selimus* — on Delaie and Damocles — are attributed to Greene by Robert Allott in *England's Parnassus* (1600); — a collection of quotations from the then extant poetry of England. The internal evidence has to do with the resemblance between certain lines in *Selimus* and Greene's song, "Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content"; with the fact that Greene promised a second part to *Alphonsus*, for which, in view of the failure of *Alphonsus*, Greene substituted *Selimus*; and finally that there are many resemblances between *Alphonsus* and *Selimus*.

The most earnest upholder of Dr. Grosart is Mr. Hugo Gilbert, whose dissertation²² argues strongly for Greene's authorship of *Selimus*. Gilbert believes in Allott's trustworthiness in *England's Parnassus*, in which he finds six passages from *Selimus* — an increase over Dr. Grosart's two. Mr. Gilbert finds what he thinks are certain resemblances between the character of Bullithrubble in *Selimus* to the clowns in Greene's authenticated plays. He sees in *Selimus* the same praise of country life that is to be found in some of Greene's works. The natural history allusions, the archaisms, the

²² Robert Greene's *Selimus*. Eine Litterarhistorische Untersuchung. Kiel, 1899.

Machiavellian doctrine, the proper names, all occur in Greene's acknowledged work, and so all prove Greene's authorship of *Selimus*.

Gilbert pointed out that the source of *Selimus* is to be found in Paulus Jovius' "Rerum Turcicarum commentarius ad Invictissimum Caesarem Carolum V. Imperatorem Augustum"; and he cites as proof that Greene knew Paulus Jovius passages in *Farewell to Follie* (p. 337) and *Royal Exchange* (p. 254). Professor Hart corrects Mr. Gilbert by showing that Greene got his plot for *Selimus* not from Paulus Jovius directly, but indirectly from Primaudaye's *Academy*.²³ The belief that *Selimus* was written about 1587, and the fact that then was a time when Greene was borrowing very extensively from Primaudaye, especially in the *Farewell to Follie*, Professor Hart regards as proof of Greene's authorship.

Having set down the arguments advanced for Greene's authorship of this play, I now give those against it. The first is that of Dr. Wolff,²⁴ who doubts Greene's authorship on the ground of the characterization. This matter he thinks would alone be decisive, for *Selimus*, *Acomat*, *Corcut*, *Bajazet*, are characters so well rounded and individual as to seem beyond Greene's power.

Professor Gayley declines to think Greene the author of *Selimus*. Allott, he says, is not trustworthy, for he assigns to Greene passages which do not belong to him — two, for instance, which belong to Spenser. Professor Gayley fails to see in *Selimus* any traces of Greene's diction, sentiment, poetic quality, or rhythmical form. As a suggestion, he proposes Lodge's name in connection with *Selimus*, on the grounds of relationship to *Civill War* and *Mucedorus*.

²³ Chap. LIX., p. 642. "Of the Education of a Prince in Good Manners and Conditions."

²⁴ Eng. Stud., Vol. 37, p. 359, note.

Collins does not print *Selimus* in his edition of Greene, inasmuch as he finds Grosart's arguments unsatisfactory.

The latest word on the subject is that in the Cambridge History of English Literature,²⁵ of which the material is taken from an unpublished article by Mr. F. G. Hubbard. Mr. Hubbard pointed out (1) that the comic scene in *Locrine* which is paralleled in *Selimus* stands alone in the latter play, while in *Locrine* there is much low humor of the same kind in connection with the same characters; (2) that *Locrine* preceded *Selimus* because *Locrine* has many lines from Spenser's *Complaints* not found in *Selimus*; but that with one possible exception, *Selimus* has nothing from the *Complaints* not to be found in *Locrine*; (3) that, moreover, one of these borrowed lines in *Selimus* is followed by five other lines not in the *Complaints* but in *Locrine*; that *Locrine* and *Selimus* are not by the same man, since *Selimus* has borrowings from the *Faerie Queene* while *Locrine* has none [Collins believed that *Locrine* and *Selimus* were written by the same man]; (5) that *Locrine* was not completed before 1591, when the *Complaints* were published [As a matter of fact the *Complaints* circulated widely before their publication]; (6) that a line near the end of Act V., "One mischief follows on another's neck," is apparently copied from *Tancred and Gismond* (published 1591, with preface dated August 8) — a line not given in the earlier MS. version of the play; (7) that since *Selimus* is later than *Locrine* (which is later than August 8, 1591), and since Greene died September 3, 1592, the issue of Greene's authorship is brought within narrow limits.

Such at length are the arguments for and against the attribution of *Selimus* to Greene. The only conclusion which can be justified, so far as I can see, is that the problem has not been, probably cannot be, settled.

²⁵ Vol. V., p. 96.

With regard to *George-a-Greene*, which has been included among Greene's plays by Dyce, Grosart, Collins, and Dickinson, the problem is quite as complex as that of *Selimus*. No one of these men is satisfied with the grounds on which he included the play, but no one is quite content to leave the play out. It may be well to state the situation.

On the title-page of the 1599 edition are the following manuscript notes:

Written by . . . a minister who acted the piners pt in it himselfe.
Teste W. Shakespeare.

Ed. Juby saith that the play was made be Ro. Greene.

These notes were made by different persons. The handwriting is of the style of the Elizabethan age. Upon the value of these memoranda the validity of the ascription of the play to Greene partly depends. And it can be said at once that, so far as that validity is concerned, all scholars are agreed that the notes are of decidedly questionable worth. In the first place it can only be assumed that they are the notes of contemporaries; and in the second place it can only be assumed that they are genuine. As Mr. Greg says, no one can judge without examining the original notes, and without being familiar with the Ireland and Collier forgeries.²⁶

The attribution of *George-a-Greene* to Greene on the basis of the notes is, therefore, made on very slender evidence.

The other basis for belief or disbelief in Greene's authorship has been found within the play itself. The internal evidence has been variously interpreted. Mertins²⁷ thought the play was not by Greene. It lacks, Mertins says, the pompous style and classical references, the imaginative elements, the poetical diction, the Latin, French, and Italian phrasing, the unusual word compounds, the ornate epithets,

²⁶ See Appendix II., where these notes enter into the discussion of whether or not Greene was at one time a minister.

²⁷ *Robert Greene and the Play of George-a-Greene*. Breslau, 1885.

so common in Greene's other plays. The grammatical forms are different from Greene's; the meter is unlike that of Greene's plays; as for the similarity between *George-a-Greene* and *Friar Bacon*, that may be due merely to the similarity in material.

To most of Mertins' objections, Professor Collins agrees. Yet he believes the play to be Greene's, and he includes it in the edition of Greene's works. The play is built, he says, as Greene built plays; the types of character are like Greene's; there are similarities between this play and *Friar Bacon* and *James IV*. And so Professor Collins, "though the evidence . . . is far from conclusive," thinks the play should be given to Greene because "there is no dramatist of those days known to us to whom it could be assigned with more probability."

Professor Gayley²⁸ is non-committal. He finds in *George-a-Greene* the skilful plot, the popular material, such as Greene used in *Friar Bacon*. And he finds here and there a rhetorical style like Greene's. But he does not find "the curious imagery, the precious visualizing, the necromantic monstrous toys," nor the "conscious affectation of unconscious art." The conversations, while sometimes like Greene's, are not on the whole equal to his "humorous indirection and his craft."

Thus the matter stands.

Henslowe records five performances of the play between December 29, 1593, and January 22, 1594. But the first entry is not marked as that of a new play. The title-page states that the play had been acted by the Sussex company, a company which is not known to have acted at that time any of Greene's unquestioned plays, although the Sussex men soon afterwards joined Greene's company in the production of *Friar Bacon*.

²⁸ *Rep. Eng. Com.* p. 418.

George-a-Greene was entered to Cuthbert Burbie on April 1, 1595. The earliest known copy is that in the library of the Duke of Devonshire, dated 1599, and uniform as to printer, publisher, year, vignette, and motto with *Orlando Furioso*.

As to date, nothing is known. If the play is by Greene, it belongs undoubtedly just before or just after *James IV*. The only indication of date within the play is that in line 42 the Earl of Kendal says,

"Lest I, like martial Tamburlaine, lay waste
Their bordering countries."

(C) GREENE AS A DRAMATIST

It was following fashion which turned Greene to the writing of plays. Just as the popularity of *Euphues* started him off on the production of *Mamillia*, and as *Daphnis and Chloe* gave the impulse for *Menaphon* with its pastoralism, so the great success of *Tamburlaine* was sufficient to focus Greene's attention.

Before the day of Marlowe and Kyd, great progress had been made in both tragedy and comedy; but the evolution, even after the building of the theaters, had been gradual. With the exception of Lyly no man stands out in sharp distinction from his fellows as having made this or another contribution to the art of play-writing. The plays written before 1585, for the most part, gave an impression of their impersonality. Not that they were authorless, but that they are today significant more as types and as manifestations of varied dramatic interests than as products of individual men possessed of individual personalities. It is not remarkable, therefore, that Greene, busy with the exploitation of prose narrative, and engrossed in the discovery of his own powers in the writing of fiction, and eager in his inculcation of new standards of refinement,

should not have turned to the writing of plays before he did. Nor is it remarkable that he turned when he did. However closely engaged in one kind of activity, Greene was never so indifferent to contemporary literary movements as not to be aware at once of the entrance of a new force within the sphere of popular favor. And so it was that the plays of Kyd and Marlowe at once caught his eye.

It has often been remarked that Greene's plays fall into two distinct classes, his failures and his successes. The explication of this one fact involves what is essential to an understanding of Greene as a dramatist. There is *Alphonsus*, which attempts the bloody deeds of Mars; and there is *Friar Bacon*, which invites refreshing drinks of milk in the dairy-house at Fressingfield. Both classes spring from very definite qualities of Greene's mind; and both are of necessity what they are.

< Greene's first play was a direct outgrowth from *Tamburlaine*. Because of that fact, it was a failure. *Tamburlaine* is essentially a play dependent upon the character of its hero to sustain interest. The march of events, as the Scythian shepherd advances to his kingship of the world — conquest following conquest, — has no dramatic interest in itself as compared with the interest with which we behold the revelation of character which those events show. > The action of *Tamburlaine*, lacking in complexity and in unity, forms only a succession of gorgeous scenes bound together by a unity of characterization, and supported by the power of the imagination with which the hero is conceived. Indomitable ambition, unflinching will, unlimited self-confidence working themselves out to their desired end constitute the theme of the play, and give English literature the great prototype of Richard III., Macbeth, and Milton's Satan. < *Tamburlaine* is a tremendous personality swept on by his lust for power. In his greatness, he is a hard character to imitate.

Another characteristic of Marlowe's play made it distinctive. Abandoning rhyme, Marlowe chose blank verse, and in so doing was free to let his fancy run. He was able to infuse into the verse of the play something of the spirit of his protagonist. Thus form and matter harmonized, and combined to make the effect, the Marlowesque, full of vaunting thoughts proclaimed through sonorous and high-sounding language. The sublimity of *Tamburlaine* gave it power, — the power which Greene felt, but could not copy. >

Alphonsus — whether Alphonsus V., king of Aragon, Sicily, and Naples (died 1454) or Alphonsus I., king of Aragon and Navarre (died 1134), is not quite clear — is *Tamburlaine* emasculated. So far as the arrangement of scenes is concerned, Greene's play is as good as Marlowe's. We learn of the young man's plans to regain his father's throne, of the successive steps in the realization of ambition, of Amurack's opposition to the conquest, of Alphonsus' falling in love with the Sultan's daughter. Throughout the play, incident follows incident naturally and effectively. The trouble with the play is not in the development of the action. It is rather in the fact that Greene was not able to grasp the conception of the forceful personality necessary to the success of a play which depended so largely upon that conception of character. The abundance of strength, the buoyancy of spirit, with which *Tamburlaine* compels interest, were not in Greene's power to portray. *Tamburlaine* was the very worst model Greene could have chosen.

The weakness of *Alphonsus* is very apparent. The line of action, though developing naturally, falls into two parts. There is, in reality, the play of *Alphonsus*, followed by the play of *Amurack the Turk*. The lack of unity in action results in lack of unity of character. Alphonsus, nominally the hero, shares his prominence with his opponent. Indeed Amurack is given the more prominence. He has the same

elements which *Alphonsus* has; and in addition he is engrossed in his troubles with his wife and daughter, and he is involved in various kinds of magic incantations which give a clap-trap interest to his career.

But the lack of unity in *Alphonsus* is of no great consequence in view of the play's failure to convince. Even the faintness and the inconsistencies of characterization are absorbed in this fundamental defect. Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* gathers momentum as it goes, a huge ball rolling faster and faster, moved by an invisible force within. *Alphonsus* gathers no momentum at all. Always it is Greene, behind, pushing with all his might, and laboriously trying to move an immovable weight. He makes much noise, and you would think his exertions effective if it were not that the ball is ever in the same place.

Greene's imagination could not encompass intense character. Neither could his poetic fancy attain the necessary height. Nowhere in the play is there a passage which so combines poetry and passion as any random passage in the work of Marlowe.

"Slash off his head! as though Albinus' head
Were then so easy to be slashèd off:
In faith, sir, no; when you are dead and gone,
I hope to flourish like-the pleasant spring."

ACT II., Sc. 2.

"As for this carping girl, Iphigena,
Take her with thee to bear thee company,
And in my land I rede be seen no more,
For if you do, you both shall die therefore."

ACT II., Sc. 2.

"Pagan, I say thou greatly art deceiv'd:
I clap up fortune in a cage of gold,
To make her turn her wheel as I think best;
And as for Mars whom you do say will change,
He moping sits behind the kitchen-door,
Prest at command of every scullion's mouth,

Who dares not stir, nor once to move a whit,
For fear Alphonsus then should stomach it."

ACT IV., Sc. 3.

Some critics have said that *Alphonsus* is not an imitation at all — that it was not meant as imitation, but as parody. Marlowe had had one hero. Greene would have two. Tamburlaine had met with no opposition. In the parody, let there be two conquering boastful heroes bumping their heads together and endeavoring to beat each other's brains out. Or, say, it would be as if one should turn from admiring a fine specimen of a cock, alone in his splendor, to the spectacle of that same fowl with bloody head and ruffled feathers, engaged in the most ridiculous of contests,— a rooster fight.

I do not believe that *Alphonsus* is a parody. A parody is either humorous or satirical. Now *Alphonsus* is not obviously humorous. And it is not satirical. To interpret it as such is to misunderstand Greene. Even the *Quipe for an Upstart Courtier* is not satirical, abundant as its possibilities for satire are. *Alphonsus* is a bad play, but not because it is poor satire. There is a better explanation.

Experimenter though he was, Greene was no critic. He seems never to have learned what he could not do. In the mass of his work there is good and bad mingled all together. When Greene took up his pen it was with no discrimination. His instinct, not his judgment, is to thank for what is good. His misdirected effort is to blame for what is bad. *Alphonsus* was the outcome of misapplied energy. There was no parody about it. *Tamburlaine* was popular. Greene, with the impulse derived from his ever wishing to follow a leader, attempted a play of the same kind,— and produced one of the worst of the many bad Elizabethan dramas.

Orlando Furioso is the dramatization of the incident in Ariosto's Romance in which Orlando goes mad through love

of Angelica and through jealousy of his supposedly successful rival. At the palace of Marsilius, emperor of Africa, various suitors are urging their suit for the hand of Angelica. Orlando is successful. Sacripant desires Angelica and plots to secure her. He bids his servant carve the names of Angelica and Medor on the trees. Orlando, believing the treachery of Angelica, goes mad, and creates the famous scenes of entering upon the stage "with a leg on his neck" and of ranging through the woods saying "Woods, trees, leaves; leaves, trees, woods." Angelica is banished for her supposed unfaithfulness. In the woods she meets Orlando, who does not recognize her. After a time Melissa, an enchantress, restores Orlando's wits. There is much fighting—"they fight a good while, and then breathe,"—Angelica is restored to her home, and everything ends well.

This play has been interpreted as a parody on *The Spanish Tragedy*. Greene, it is said, was satirizing the use of madness on the stage, an element in the drama made very popular by Kyd's play. The mad Orlando wandering through the forest is a burlesque on the raving Hieronimo. And "woods, trees, leaves" is only ridicule of the Grand Marshal's discovery of his dead son's body, and other similar scenes.

Orlando is universally regarded as a poor play; some are inclined to regard its badness as intentional. I do not agree to any interpretation which regards the play as a parody. I think that it is a failure; and a failure for the same reason that *Alphonsus* is. To portray insanity well on the stage is a great imaginative achievement, as *King Lear* proves. The imagination required is of a different kind, from that required to produce *Tamburlaine*. Less sweeping but none the less intense. Intensity, keen insight—without his being aware of the deficiency—were what Greene lacked. *Orlando Furioso* is an imitation just as *Alphonsus* is. Both

plays were meant to be heroic. Both are unpardonable failures. It is hard upon Greene to say so. But there is no justice in trying to excuse failure under the name of parody. Better to say at once that Greene was trying to do what he could not do. >

Friar Bacon was written in emulation of *Dr. Faustus*. The play is both a failure and a success. Inevitably so: it is a combination of two elements. There is the story of Bacon and the brazen head which he had constructed — how he had pursued learning and had become a powerful magician, how he had made the head which should enable him to encircle England with a wall of brass, how Miles, the dull servant, was set to watch, how the devil came and marred all. There is also the story of Margaret, the maid of Fressingfield, with whom Prince Edward fell in love but whom he relinquished in favor of his friend who had been sent to woo for him. This second story is a development of the hint in the old Friar Bacon ballad of the maid who had two suitors, and who preferred the lowly one to the one of high degree.

With regard to Friar Bacon himself, Greene was endeavoring to copy the figure of Faustus, all-wise, all-powerful magician. He did not succeed. There is nothing sublime about Bacon, nothing dignified. His sorcery is nothing but clap-trap; his contests with Vandermast only stage show, poor spectacle at that. Even the brazen head, as manifestation of Bacon's power, is foolish, however much a source of comedy it may be when seen through the eyes of Miles. Friar Bacon bears the same relation to Dr. Faustus that Alphonsus bears to Tamburlaine. Friar Bacon, Alphonsus, Orlando, all demand greatness of imagination; and Greene had no greatness to bestow. All three are, therefore, not so much characters which are true but only faintly portrayed, as they are mechanical figures poorly constructed.

If *Friar Bacon* were just a play with a conjurer as hero (as Greene meant it to be), it would belong with *Alphonsus* and *Orlando* among the things that would better not have been. It is, however, successful. Greene found in the old ballad upon which he based his play the hint of a story which he developed. It is this story, originally incidental, which differentiates *Friar Bacon* from the plays that had preceded it. For the story and the character of Margaret and her lover predominate over the story and character of *Friar Bacon*. In the success of the love story, and in the fusing of it with the story of Bacon, the weakness of the magician is unheeded.

Emphasizing the love story as he did, Greene became for the first time original in the drama. Marlowe had been his model in the earlier plays, and Marlowe had provided the starting-point for *Friar Bacon*. But *Friar Bacon* — the *Friar Bacon* we remember — belongs to Greene alone. For the very reason that there is nothing of Marlowe in it, it is in a new class. Greene could not copy Marlowe, but he could write plays of his own, plays distinctively his own. >

James IV. is a continuation of the work begun in *Friar Bacon*. It is a dramatization of a tale in Cinthio's *Hecatomithi* (3:1), made with considerable skill and some changes from the source.²⁹ James IV. of Scotland is married to Dorothea, the daughter of the king of England. He immediately confesses his love for the Countess Ida, a confession overheard by Ateukin. Ateukin devises plots.

²⁹ The greatest change is in the opening of the play. The long process of the development of the false love is dispensed with, and in the opening of the play James is shown to be in love with Ida at the time of his marriage with Dorothea. In the play Ateukin overhears the king's statement of love rather than hears of it, through some one else as in the novel. Greene's changes, on the whole, make for condensation and dramatic effectiveness.

Dorothea is at length persuaded of her husband's faithlessness and flees in disguise, accompanied by her dwarf, Nano. James hires an assassin who attempts to put Dorothea to death. The king of England arrives with an army. James is defeated. Dorothea comes from her disguise. James is sorry for his misdeeds and everything ends happily. This play, too, is free from the influence of Marlowe, and like *Friar Bacon* it is successful.

Failure and success, then, were Greene's results. The cause for the failure has been shown to be Greene's lack of an intense imagination and of an elevation of style which could enable him to follow the model created by Marlowe. It remains to analyze the cause of Greene's success in the plays in which he displayed his originality.

A study of Greene as a dramatist is analogous to a study of him as a novelist. *Alphonsus* and *Orlando Furioso* correspond to the tales of Valdracko and Arbasto; *Friar Bacon* and *James IV.* correspond to *Menaphon* and *Pandosto* — the former failures, and the latter successes. The qualities which make *Friar Bacon* and *James IV.* good plays are, therefore, the same qualities which make *Menaphon* and *Pandosto* good novels. The success in all cases is due to the charm with which the story is told.

Whether in novel or in play, when Greene had a theme centering around a heroine rather than around a hero, he was at his best. Greene was not effeminate. But he did have a delicacy about him, a refinement, which somehow was displayed in two charming ways. In the first place, his imagination when dealing with women characters was able to bring forth creatures for whom his reader can feel genuine interest and sympathy. I do not mean that Greene created great women characters; but he did create wholesome women. In the second place, Greene could blow through his pages the freshness of the out-of-doors.

Medea, Iphigena, Melissa, Angelica, all these are worthless figures. But three of the women in Greene's plays are of importance. These are Margaret, Ida, and Dorothea. Ida is the least fully portrayed. But she is a fine character. Whether at the court or on her porch in the country she is the same, firm in her morality to resist the love of the king, bright, clean-minded, calm, serious. Dorothea is descended from the type of faithful women who are true in the face of all disaster. When she is told of her husband's falseness, she refuses to believe. She even maintains that the letter is forged which contains the order for her assassination. But Dorothea is not an abstraction of faithfulness. She is human in her faith, she is virtuous, she is lovely. Tremblingly she sets off in disguise to avoid danger. Affectionate toward the little Nano who accompanies her in her distress, ready to forgive wrong before forgiveness is asked, beloved by all who surround her, she is an admirable woman. } I
D

/ Margaret is Greene's best character; and she is charming indeed. Margaret is a lodge-keeper's daughter, young, vivacious, witty, beautiful. She is clearly portrayed. She arouses interest as she goes about her work, as she gives the prince a drink from her dairy, as she goes with the young country folk to the fair, as she talks with Lacy and falls in love with the dashing courtier. She is faithful to the man of her choice even though her other suitor is the king's own son. When Lacy's letter comes, telling that he no longer loves her, she decides to be a nun; and if you do not know that so beautiful a play must perforce end happily, you would feel sorry for her as she makes her adieu, } M

"Now farewell, world, the engine of all woe!
Farewell to friends and father! welcome Christ!
Adieu to dainty robes! this base attire
Better befits an humble mind to God
Than all the show of rich habiliments.

Farewell, O love, and, with fond love, farewell,
Sweet Lacy, whom I loved once so dear!"

Strangely inconsistent is her renouncing of the convent when she learns that Lacy has but tried her love. Yet happily so. And beautiful is her joy in the new clothes with which she decks herself for her marriage, to go off to the court to live. Pure, unspoiled, fresh, Margaret is a rare creation.

Lovely as those heroines are, and important as they are in the development of Elizabethan drama, the figure of Nano is, Professor Woodberry thinks, the real connecting link between Greene and Shakespeare. Certainly there is much about the dwarf which is of interest. He does stand in a very striking way between the Vice of the moralities and early comedies on the one hand, and Launce and Touchstone on the other. Yet he is significant for his own sake. Nano is the product of the same imagination which produced the delightful women. He is delicately drawn. His little body, his lightness of foot, his sprightliness, his wit, his loyalty to his mistress, make him a lovable personality. Yet personality is scarcely the correct word. Our affection for Nano is not that for a fellow human being. It is rather that given to a pet or a living big doll. "What wouldn't one give to have him in a box and take him out to talk!"—as Mrs. Carlyle might say.

The figures of Ida, Dorothea, Margaret, Nano, do much to give charm to Greene's successful plays, and constitute no small part of Greene's contribution to the drama. The second element which made Greene's success was the out-of-doors which is to be found most delightfully in *Friar Bacon*. The surcharged atmosphere of courts and battle-fields clears away for the calm air of Fressingfield and the activity of the Harleston Fair, where Margaret shines "amongst the cream bowls" and where cheese is safely "set upon the racks."

"Well, if you chance to come by Fressingfield,
Make but a step into the Keeper's Lodge;
And such poor fare as woodmen can afford,
Butter and cheese, cream and fat venison,
You shall have store, and welcome therewithal."

Freshness and delicacy are Greene's contributions, manifested in the brightness of the out-of-doors, the idyllic country life, the attractive women of his comedies. The rant and superficiality of the earlier plays are Greene's, too. They are a part of his work, and reveal a definite side of his make-up. But they are not contributions. Marlowe had made an advance. For Greene to have copied Marlowe — even to have done well what Marlowe had done — would have been no addition. To have copied Marlowe and to have failed, is loss. In the later plays, however, there is originality and gain.

·CONCLUSION·

It cannot but be, with all the tangled threads of discussion and the intricate analyses, that the idea of Greene emerges somewhat blurred and indistinct. I propose, then, as shortly as possible, to bring together the results of the foregoing chapters into a summary. Such a process may perhaps make the portrait a little clearer.

I have presented Greene as, fundamentally, a man of letters. To this one fact all other facts are subordinate. The statement that he wrote for his living explains Greene as fully, I think, as any single statement can. It was this keeping his finger on the pulse of the day, as it were, which determined the course of his career and which developed his characteristics both personal and literary.

Greene produced many works of many kinds. Beginning with the didactic narrative of *Lyly*, he changed, as fashions changed, in order to follow closely the general trend of Elizabethan fiction. Frame-work tales, romances, prodigal stories, repentances, social pamphlets both serious and not serious, he wrote and arranged under one or another of his three mottoes. And because no one of those forms died out in his lifetime he continued occasionally to publish pamphlets of an earlier kind after he had for the most part proceeded to a later one. Once Marlowe and Kyd had drawn his attention to the drama, he began to write plays. Whenever he saw an opportunity, in season or out, he was ready in a moment with something for the market. Hasty in publication, and desiring nothing beyond the immediate sale, Greene took no thought for finishing his work to a

degree of perfection, or for removing from it flaws that might easily have been removed. Certain qualities of style he wanted it to have for it to be successful. Further than that there was no need to go. Much of it, consequently, is slipshod. It could not well have been otherwise in view of the rapidity with which Greene wrote it and of the end he had in mind. There is about it, however, that which deserves praise. Greene, for all his making no attempt at "winning credite," had enough of real ability in him to impart significance to most of his writings, whether in the way of introducing continental ideas or of creating narrative.

To us, much of the culture is commonplace and dull. We are no longer interested, except in a historical way, in the new ideas on manners and speech which were of so much concern to the Elizabethans. But in the narratives we can still find some pleasure. In all of them Greene manifests skill in getting the story along. Slow as the action appears to be, with the obstructing speeches and passions and tears, it is, in truth, usually swift. Characterization is less strong. There are few people in Greene's works whom we remember for the vividness with which they are conceived. Some of them have a delightful air of refinement and charm; some of them are sufficiently distinct for us to know them and to become interested in their welfare as characters. But none are great.

It cannot be said that there is an evolution in the works of Greene as regards the kinds of pamphlets. His romances are not a higher literary form than the frame-work tales, nor did the former arise out of the latter. The prodigal stories, again, were a progress in time only, and developed from an interest not associated with the romances. The conny-catching pamphlets came from no broader attitude toward life than did any of the works which had preceded them.

The earlier novels are encumbered with all the Euphuistic adornment that Greene could well bestow. The later ones are comparatively simple. The difference results partly, of course, from the gradual turn of the age in the direction of simplicity; but it seems to me that there was also a growth in the art of expression by Greene himself. While he kept morality as the pretext for his writing, he more and more appreciated the story for its own sake. His sentences became shorter, and grammatical to a degree unknown in the beginning. The style was more compact, more direct, and, to us at least, more effective.

These are the main points about what and how Greene wrote. There is one other. Back of the matter and the method there was the man. We began with the man, and we shall end with him.

If we do not approach Greene in the right way, he is exceedingly tiresome. There is much about him that is superficial. If we cannot see beyond the didacticism and the literary mannerisms, — speeches, letters, long-drawn courtships, and the rest of it — Greene is very stupid. And his personality has no attraction for us if we are wholly unsympathetic for the young wits who attempted to flourish in Bohemia, who lived their short lives and died untimely deaths.

But if our nature is not too unlike his, we find much that interests us. When we come to know him, Greene appeals to our imagination. About the idea of him in his green cloak, his hair a little over-long, his reddish, pointed beard "whereat you might hang a jewel" — perhaps a slightly fantastic figure if we judge him closely — about this picture, we gather the characteristics which Greene had, and we endeavor to recreate him in our mind's eye. We think of his carelessness and his lack of providence, his wilful ways, his separation from his wife, and his last thought of her. We remember his bravado, a certain little swagger in his walk,

a pride in his work that he could never quite down. And his sentimentality, his aphorisms, his tendency to preach, all these we put into the picture.

We pardon the tediousness. We take pleasure in the charm and refinement which is present in his romances and his poems, and in the freshness of his better plays. The illustrative tales of the conny-catchers give us keen delight. But we must have humor enough not to interpret them too seriously.

About our whole conception of Greene there should, indeed, be something humorous. We need to laugh at his oddities rather than to be provoked to indignation by them. Greene is not a man to whom life unfolds infinite possibilities. He has no visions of greatness. Yet he does not tell us to the contrary. His interest is in the affair of the day; his trade is his chief concern. But he never cracks a smile as he sets about to expose the vices of London, never acknowledges for a moment that he is not the social investigator he pretends to be. He publishes stories of repentance, and leaves it to us to discover that repentance is only his necessary machinery.

He lies continually. We cannot accept a word he says without the support of our own judgment. It is not the kind of lying, however, that we censure harshly; it does nobody harm. We are inclined to be a little out of temper sometimes; we wish he were more trustworthy, for it would save us trouble in understanding him. But after all, it's pretense and we must recognize it as such.

Greene is interested in appearances. He does not care about the real worth of what he writes. If it looks well, he is satisfied. Sincerity is not among his ideals. He gathers up all sorts of information from widely scattered sources, he attributes quotations now to one man and now to another, he repeats himself, he is inconsistent over and

over again. None of these things disturbs his peace of mind. He says nothing about them; he seems to be unaware that they exist. So he goes calmly on. Naive we might almost think him to be if we did not know otherwise.

There is a dark side, too. Part of the repentance was genuine. Although we may laugh up our sleeve at the childish faith in the credulity of man, we cannot but pity Greene that he was driven so hard. "This booke hath many things, which I would not have written on my Tombe," he said in one of his Prefaces;¹ and the cry cannot fail to reach us. The works had not been bad; nor the life, it may be, so bad as he thought. But the anguish for them both was not lessened thereby.

Pity does not grant a man a place in literature. He must deserve it on other grounds. Greene's place is secure to him for the historical reason that he was one of the Elizabethans. It is secure also through the charm of his poems and romances, and through the clever social pamphlets. Finally, it is secure through the personality of the man himself.

¹ Vol. XII., p. 196.

APPENDIX I

TABULATION OF THE FRAME-WORK TALES

Planetomachia, 1585.

- ✓ VENUS TRAGEDIE.—Italianesque, on the model of the novella. Analyzed in the text, p. 29.
- ✓ SATURNES TRAGEDIE.—To show the evil influence of love. The story of Rhodope and Psamneticus of Memphis, the courtesan who became queen.

Penelopes Web, 1587.

- ✓ FIRST TALE.—To show wifely obedience. A queen put away and taken again. There are speeches (p. 172, p. 173, Vol V.) practically like some in Saturnes Tragedie (p. 125, p. 127, Vol. V). The situation is much the same. There is no doubt that Greene had the earlier story in mind when he wrote the latter. This tale is from Cintio, III, 5.
- ✓ SECOND TALE.—To illustrate chastity. A woman loved by a nobleman is imprisoned by him. She escapes and joins her husband. The nobleman repents and gives them riches.
- ✓ THIRD TALE.—To praise silence in women. A king gives his crown to the son whose wife is most virtuous, that is, best able to keep silence.

Censure to Philautus, 1587.

- ✓ ULISSES TALE.—A woman elopes with a gentleman of the court whom she later poisons. Fearing treachery in her husband's reconciliation, she kills herself.

HELENUS TRAGEDIE.—How a queen outwitted her enemy who was in possession of her city.

HECTORS TRAGEDIE.—To illustrate fortitude in a soldier. The eldest of three brothers defends his crown against the rebellion of his united younger brothers.

ACHILLES TRAGEDIE.—On liberality. Roxader of Athens on account of his liberality was able to save his native city and to be made dictator.

Perymedes, 1588.

FIRST TALE.—Story of Marcella and Prestynes, an imitation of Decameron, II. 6. The tale of a separation of husband and wife and children by Fortune. Of their reunion.

SECOND TALE.—A romantic story of a poor man and a rich girl. The man goes away to make his fortune. She follows, but is shipwrecked. She is cast upon the same shore. He has become famous. They are married and go back to their home. The story is from Decameron, V. 2.

THIRD TALE.—A young woman loves a poor man; her father has another suitor selected. It happens that the father and daughter and selected suitor are banished. They lead humble lives. The poor man follows them, wins renown, and marries the girl.

Alcida, 1588.

FIRST TALE.—Story of Fiordespine, who for her haughtiness in love was turned into a marble pillar.

SECOND TALE.—Story of Eriphila, who for her fickleness was turned into a camelion. (Some passages identical with passages in Mamillia.)

THIRD TALE.—Marpesia, for her inability to keep a secret, was turned into a rose-tree.

Ciceronis Amor, 1589.

THE SHEEPHEARDES TALE.—A pastoral. How Phillis and Coridon made up and were married.

Orpharion, 1590.

- ✓ ORPHEUS TALE.—Tale of Lydia, from Ariosto, 34:7-43.
✓ ARIONS TALE.—How Argentina preserved her chastity by promising to consent to her lover after he had been confined for three days without food, and how the lover broke the agreement by first eating meat.

Mourning Garment, 1590.

THE SHEPHEARDS TALE.—A pastoral. How Alexis abandoned Rosamond for Phillida, and how Rosamond died of grief. Whereupon Alexis hanged himself upon a willow-tree.

Francescos Fortunes, 1590.

THE HOSTS TALE.—The shepherdess Mirimida had three suitors. Letters from them all arrived at the same instant. She appointed a meeting with them all. When they had promised to abide by her decision, she told them all nay.

Farewell to Follie, 1591.

- ✓ PERATIOS TALE.—Tale of Pride. Vadislaus, king of Buda, was deposed for his pride and tyranny, and went forth to wander as a beggar.
✓ COSIMOS TALE.—Of Lust. Story of Semiramis.
✓ BERARDINOS TALE.—Of Gluttony. A poor man unjustly judged by the drunken ruler, invited the ruler to a feast. While the ruler was drunk the poor man built a scaffold and invited the citizens. When the ruler found that he was to be hanged, he hanged himself.

Groatworth of Wit, 1592.

LAMILIAS TALE.— An animal story with a hidden meaning.

Accounts for the enmity between dogs and badgers.

ROBERTOS TALE.— Of the fabliau type. Story of the farmer bridegroom, who is cheated out of his wife and forced to marry another girl.

Vision, 1590-92?

CHAUCERS TALE.— Of the fabliau type. Analyzed in the text, p. 28.

GOWERS TALE.— A tale of jealousy. A man who has put away his wife on account of jealousy, is cured of his jealousy by a magician who transforms him into a young man. In this shape he tries his wife's faith, and finding her true takes her back again.

APPENDIX II

MISCONCEPTIONS CONCERNING GREENE

THERE are a few matters which remain to be treated here. These, perhaps, demand an apology for being considered at all. At least, if they cannot be totally ignored they are no longer of sufficient importance to warrant their inclusion elsewhere than in an appendix. Although unmistakably founded on errors, they have so continued to be discussed seriously by Greene's biographers as almost to make them traditional, and a discussion of them unavoidable.

I. One of these misapprehensions is that of Greene's connection with the church. Since the days of Dyce various biographers, Bernhardt, Fleay, and Grosart, have argued that Greene was at one time a minister. Fuller investigation has shown that he was not. The situation may be briefly summarized as follows:

1. In 1576, a Robert Grene was presented by the Queen to the rectory of Walkington in Yorkshire.¹ There is no reason, however, on the basis of this fact, for assuming that Greene was connected with the church, inasmuch as he was at that time a freshman in the University.

2. Greene cannot have been he who was Vicar of Tolls-bury in Essex from June 19, 1584, to February 17, 1586;²

¹ Rymer's *Foedra*, Vol. XV, p. 765.

² The entry (in Newcourt's *Repertorium*, Vol. II, p. 602, which uses as its authority Bp. Grindal's *Register*, fol. 213; fol. 225) is as follows:

"Tollsbury.

Rob. Grene cl. 19 Jun. 1584, per mort. Searles.

Barth. Moody. cl. 17 Feb. 1585, per resign. Grene."

for that period in Greene's life was, by his own account, filled with other events.

3. He cannot, as Mr. Fleay thought,³ be identified, as Robert *the parson*, with the Robert Persj or Rupert Persten who was with the Earl of Leicester's troupe on the Continent from December 1585, to July, 1587. We have no evidence that Greene formed a part of this troupe. It is, moreover, useless to attempt to make *parson* out of the Persj or Persten as it appears in the Saxon and Danish records. Besides, if Greene was Vicar of Tollesbury, as Fleay said he was, he must have been abroad as a member of a troupe of players during three months of the time that he was preaching in Essex.

4. Greene himself does not speak of having been a minister. Nor do any of his contemporaries, Nashe, Burbye, Dekker, Heywood, Chettle,—not even the arch-enemy, Gabriel Harvey.

5. A passage in the Epistle Dedicatorie to the anonymous tract *Martine Mar-Sixtus* has been taken to refer to Greene as a minister. This tract was issued in 1591, and was re-issued with change of date only in 1592. The epistle is signed R. W.⁴ and clearly refers to Greene in the words about those who "are faine to put on mourning garment, and cry, Farewell." But the words, "I loathe to speake it, every red-nosed rimester is an author," whether they refer to Greene or not, are those from which the misunderstanding has come. It is, though, a misunderstanding which is removed at once when the word is seen to be not *minister*, as Dr. Grosart read, but *rimester*.

6. Much has been made, at times, of certain manuscript

³ *Life of Shakespeare* pp. 92, 105; *Hist. Stage*, p. 82.

⁴ This Epistle is reprinted in *Notes and Queries*, 10th Ser., No. 2, Dec. 17, 1904; and the suggestion is there made that R. W. was Richard Willes.

notes on the title-page of the 1599 edition of *The Pinner of Wakefield*. These notes are:

(a.) "Written by . . . a minister who acted the pinner's pt in it himselfe. Teste W. Shakespeare."

(b) "Ed. Juby saith that the play was made by Ro. Greene."

Reasoning on the evidence of these notes is unsound for it must be remembered, as Mr. Gayley well says,⁵ "that both attributions are hearsay; that both notes are anonymous, that one or both may be fraudulent;⁶ that there is no certain proof that they were written by contemporaries; and that, unless their contents are shown to be accurate as well as authentic, they do not connect any Robert Greene with the ministry."

II. Another of the misapprehensions concerning Greene is that he was at one time an actor. That Greene was an actor was held particularly by Dyce and Fleay, the former of whom misinterpreted certain of Harvey's remarks about Greene's "wilde head, full of mad brain and a thousand crotchets;" the latter of whom was anxious to identify Greene the parson as an actor in Leicester's troupe. There is, however, no reason on the grounds taken by Dyce or Fleay, nor on any other grounds, for thinking that he was ever professionally an actor. Neither he nor any of his contemporaries says anything about it.

III. That Greene was once studying to become a physician has often been stated in biographies of him. The basis of the statement has of course been the occurrence of the phrase "student in phisicke" on the title-page of *Planeto-*

⁵ *Representative English Comedies*, p. 401.

⁶ It seems good to call attention to a remark made by Mr. Greg in *Mod. Lang. Rev.* 1906, p. 244. He said, "One to be competent to judge (in regard to these manuscript notes) must examine the original notes, and also be familiar with the Ireland and the Collier forgeries."

machia, 1585. But the presence of these words does not in any way warrant the assumption that Greene was a student of medicine. Inasmuch as *Planetomachia* is a pamphlet designed to set forth the opposition of the planets and to be an exposition concerning their influence, it seems better to interpret the *phisicke* in the sense of natural philosophy, in which sense it is used, for example in Thomas Bowes' translation of Primaudaye's *French Academy* (1586) as "the studie of naturall things: metaphysycke, which is of supernatural things;" and to believe that Greene used the word merely that he might speak with pretended authority on the subject of the stars.

APPENDIX III

EARLY ALLUSIONS TO GREENE

In the following pages no attempt is made to bring together all the early allusions to Greene. Only those are printed which seem to help in forming an estimate of how Greene was regarded by his contemporaries.

1. Letter by Christopher Bird. Aug. 29, 1592. Harvey's Works, Ed. Grosart. Vol. I, p. 160.

"In steed of other novels, I sende you my opinion, in a plaine, but true Sonnet, upon the famous new worke, intituled, *A Quippe for an upstart Courtier*; or, forsooth, *A quaint Dispute betweene Velvet-breeches, and Cloth-breeches*; as fantastickall and fond a Dialogue, as I have seene: and for some Particulars, one of the most licentious, and intolerable Invectives, that ever I read."

A due Commendation of the Quipping Autor.

Greene the Connycatcher, of this Dreame the Autor.

For his dainty devise, deserveth the hauter.

A rakehell: A makeshift: a scribbling foole:

A famous bayard, in Citty, and Schoole.

Now sicke, as a Dog: and ever brainesick:

Where such a raving, and desperate Dick?

Sir reverence, A scurvy Master of Art.

He sweared inough . . .

Aunscornes ther Aunswere: and Envy Salutes

With Shortest vowels, and with longest mutes.

For farther triall, himself he referres

To prooffe, and sound judgment, that seldome erres.

Now good Robin-good-fellow, and gentle Greene-sleeves,

Give him leave to be quiet, that none aggreeves.

2. Harvey's The Second Letter. Sept. 5, 1592.

My next businesse was to enquire after the famous Author: who was reported to lye dangerously sicke in a shoemakers house near Dow-gate:

not of the plague, . . . as a Gentleman saide, but of a surfett of pickle herringe and rennish wine, or as some suppose, of an exceeding feare. For in his extreamest want, he offered ten, or rather then faile twenty shillings to the printer (a huge som with him at that instant) to leave out the matter of the three brothers. p. 162.

I was suddainely certified, that the king of the paper stage (so the Gentleman tearmed *Greene*) had played his last part, & was gone to Tarleton: whereof I protest, I was nothing glad . . . because I was Deprived of that remedy in Law, that I entended against him, in the behalfe of my Father. p. 167.

Looke for my Confutation of his fine Quippe . . . whome his sweete hostisse, for a tender farewell, crowned with a Garland of Bayes: to shew, that a tenth Muse honoured him more being deade, than all the nine honoured him alive. p. 172.

Here lies the man, whom mistrisse Isam crown'd with bayes;
Shee, shee, that joyed to heare, her Nightingales sweete layes.
p. 1.

3. Harvey's Third Letter. Sept. 8 & 9, 1592.

Thanke other for thy borrowed & filched plumes of some little Italianated bravery; & what remaineth, but flat Impudencie, and grosse Detraction: the proper ornaments of thy sweete utterance? p. 187.

I am not to extenuate or prejudice his wit, which could not any way be great, though som way not the least of our vulgar writers, & mani-waies very ungracious: but who ever esteemed him either wise, or learned, or honest, or any way credible? p. 189.

The second Toy of London; the Stale of Poules, the Ape of Euphues, the Vice of the Stage, the mocker of the simple world: . . . Peruse his famous bookes: and in steede of *Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci* (that forsooth was his professed Poesie) Loe a wilde head, ful of mad braine and a thousand crotchets: A scholler, a Discourser, a Courtier, a ruffian, a Gamester, a Lover, etc., p. 189.

But I pray God they have not done more harme by corruption of manners, than by quickening of witte: and I would, some Buyers had either more Reason to discerne, or lesse Appetite to desire such Novels. p. 190.

The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia is not greene enough for queasie stomackes, but they must have *Greenes* Arcadia: and I beleeeve most eagerlie longed for *Greenes* Faerie Queene. p. 191.

4. Chettle. Kind-harts Dreame. Dec. 8, 1592. Ed. Rimbault. Percy. Soc. Vol. 5.

About three moneths since died M. Robert Greene, leaving many papers in sundry Booke sellers hands, among other his Groats-worth of wit, in which, a letter written to divers play-makers, is offensively by one or two of them taken . . . For the first, whose learning I reverence, and, at the perusing of Greenes booke, stroke out what then, in conscience I thought, he in some displeasure writ: or had it been true, yet to publish it was intollerable: him I would wish to use me no worse than I deserve. I had onely in the copy this share, it was il written, as sometime Greenes hand was none of the best, . . . To be brieft, I writ it over. p. iv.

With him was the fifth, a man of indifferent yeares, of face amible, of body well proportioned, his attire after the habite of a scholler-like gentleman, onely his haire somewhat long, whome I supposed to be Robert Greene, maister of Artes. . . . He was of singular pleasaunce, the verye supporter, and, to no mans, disgrace bee this intended, the only comedian, of a vulgar writer, in this country. p. 11.

5. Nashe, Foure Letters Confuted. Jan. 12, 1593. Ed. McKerrow.

Had hee liv'd, *Gabriel*, . . . he would have made thee an example of ignominy to all ages that are to come, and driven thee to eate thy owne booke butterd, as I sawe him make an Appariter once in a Tavern eate his citation, waxe and all, very handsomely serv'd twixt two dishes. p. 271.

Is my stile like *Greenes* or my jeaste like *Tarltons*? Do I talke of any counterfeit birds, or hearbs, or stones, or rake up any new-found poetry from under the wals of Troy? p. 319.

Of force I must graunt that *Greene* came oftner in print than men of judgment allowed off, but neverthesse he was a daintie slave to content the taile of a Tearme, and stufte Serving mens pockets. p. 329.

What *Greene* was, let some other answer for him as much as I have done; I had no tuition over him; he might have writ another *Galatæo* of manners, for his manners everie time I came in his companie: I saw no such base shifting or abhominable villanie by him. Something there was which I have heard, not seene, that hee had not that regarde to his credite in, which had beene requisite he should. p. 330.

6. *Greenes Newes both from Heaven and Hell*, Anon. 1593.

You have beene a busie fellowe with youre penne, it was you that writ the Bookes of cony-catching, but sirra, could you finde out the base abuses of a company of petty varlets that lived by pilfering cosonages, and could you not as well have descryed the subtill and fraudulent practises of great conny-catchers, such as rides upon footeclothes, and sometime in coatches, and walkes the streets in long gownes and velvet coates?

7. *Greenes Funeralls*. 1594. By R. B.

(A series of verses eulogizing Greene most highly. Valuable for its list of Greene's works.)

8. Warner. *Pan his Syrinx*. 1584. In 2nd Ed. 1597.

A scholler better than my selfe on whose grave the grasse now groweth green, whom otherwise, though otherwise to me guiltie, I name not.

(Warner is probably accusing Greene of plagiarism in that he took the plot of *Never too Late* from his *Ophelies*.)

9. Francis Meres. *Palladis Tamia*. 1598. An English Garner. Critical Essays and Literary Fragments, with an Introduction by J. Churton Collins.

As Achilles tortured the dead body of Hector; and as Antonius and his wife Fulvia tormented the lifeless corpse of Cicero; so Gabriel Harvey hath showed the same inhumanity to Greene, that lies full low in his grave. p. 19.

10. Rowlands. *Tis Merrie when Gossips Meete*. 1602. Hunterian Club. A conference between a gentleman and an apprentice.

PRENTICE

What lacke you Gentle-man? See a new Booke new come foorth. Sir: buy a new Booke, sir.

GENTLEMAN

New Booke say'st: Faith I can see no prettie thing come foorth to my humours liking. There are some old Bookes that I have more delight in than in your new, if thou couldst help me to them.

PRENTICE

Troth sir, I thinke I can shew you as many of all sorts as any in London, sir.

GENTLEMAN

Can'st helpe mee to all Greenes Bookes in one volume? But I will have them every one, not any wanting.

PRENTICE

Sir; I have the most part of them, but I lacke Conny-catching, and some halfe dozen more: but I thinke I could procure them. There be in the Towne I am sure can fit you.

11. Dekker. A Knights Conjuring. 1607. Percy Society. Ed. Rimbault, Vol. 5. p. 76.

These were likewise carousing to one another at the holy well, some of them singing Pæans to Apollo, som of them hymnes to the rest of the Goddes, whil'st Marlow, Greene, and Peele had got under the shades of a large vyne, laughing to see Nash (that was but newly come to their Colledge) still haunted with the sharpe and satyricall spirit that followed him here upon earth.

12. Overbury. Characters. Ed. Rimbault. 1890. p. 101. A Chamber-maide.

She reads Greenes works over and over.

13. Taylor. The Water Poet. Works, Ed. 1630. Spenser Soc. 1869. Praise of Hemp-Seed, p. 72.

In Paper many a Poet now survives
Or else their lines had perish'd with their lives,
Old Chaucer, Gower, and Sir Thomas More,
Sir Philip Sidney who the Lawrell wore,
Spencer, and Shakespeare did in Art excell,
Sir Edward Dyer, Greene, Nash, Daniel,
Silvester Beaumont, Sir John Harington.

14. Heywood. Hierarchie of the Blessed Angels. 1635, p. 206.

Greene who had in both Academies ta'en
Degree of Master, yet could never gaine
To be called more than Robin.

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V I T A

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